Church Union News and Views

Organ of the Continuation Committee

of the

South India Joint Committee on Union

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THE CHRISTIAN LITERATURE SOCIETY, MADRAS

Vol. I **No. 1**

GREETINGS

President Wilson said in Washington, U.S.A., in May, 1917, just as America was entering the war, 'It is a fine consummation of life to be able to do what you have long wished to do.'

The Continuation Committee of the Joint Committee on Church Union in South India may well say that with the issue of this magazine they are enjoying that 'consummation of life' that President Wilson spoke of some years ago, for they have long had in mind the desire to publish some paper that would enable them to place before their own Churches in South India, and before the very large and ever increasing circle of men and women around the world who are becoming deeply interested in this whole subject of Church Union, the actual facts as to what has happened, their own interpretation of their 'Scheme', and to give others free and full opportunity to express their views in regard to that 'Scheme'.

It has now become possible for them to publish such a magazine and therefore they are launching 'Church Union—News and Views', which will be published as a bi-monthly and which will contain first of all definite and reliable news concerning the Church Union Movement in South India and in all other places as far as we can learn thereof. We hope, especially, to be able to inform our readers concerning all actions taken with reference to our 'Scheme' in other

parts of India and in other countries. We hope, further, to try to tell our readers especially in South India just what we mean by the provisions of the 'Scheme'. It is necessary that all should understand the meaning and intention of those that framed the 'Scheme'.

But in addition to these matters there will be still abundant opportunities for others to tell what they think the 'Scheme' means as it stands, and to show what they think it should mean. Neither the members of the 'Joint Committee' nor those of the 'Continuation Committee' claim infallibility in any way, and hence they realise that they may have failed to say what they wanted to say and that others cannot get their meaning out of the words used. If so there will be room not only for criticism but also for amendment. Besides the Committees may have failed in other aspects of their work, and this too should be remedied. What we all should work for is the best possible 'Scheme' so that the Church that is built thereon may indeed be well built and stand for many generations to come.

The Congregational Union and The Lambeth Conference

By the time that this magazine reaches its readers two momentous gatherings will have been held in England. The first to meet will be the World Congregational Union which gathers at Bournemouth during the first week of July. Here representatives from all the Congregational Churches of the World come together and deliberate concerning the welfare of the Kingdom as represented by their Churches. The general subject of their meeting will be, 'The Living Church'. Among the speakers is J. V. Chelliah, Esq., M.A., present Moderator of the South India United Church. Mr. Chelliah is the official representative of that Church at this gathering and will also present the 'Proposed Scheme of Union' there.

The Lambeth Conference also gathers in July and there will be present, we are told, nearly 350 Bishops of the Anglican fellowship. 'The Proposed Scheme of Union' will also occupy the attention of this Conference. Several books, and endless pamphlets and articles have been written telling the Bishops what they should do with reference to the 'Scheme'. It will be no easy task for them to come to a decision that will be acceptable to all members of their Churches. All fully realise that this meeting will have a very serious effect on the whole Anglican fellowship. Our prayers are with them during their meetings that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit Himself who guided aright the first Council of the Church at Jerusalem and who is still ready to guide those who are willing to follow His lead.

We hope to give full reports of these Conferences in our next number.

Our First Number

Much space is occupied in this number of 'Church Union' with documents that may have been seen by many of our readers in other papers. But it is felt that the purpose of this magazine will not be fully achieved unless its readers, especially the ministers and laymen in South India, can see for themselves what is being said and done with reference to their 'Proposed Scheme'. No lasting union can be built save on the intelligent interest of those concerned and hence it is necessary that all should know all that can be known about the proposals we have made. In later numbers we hope to explain, discuss, criticise and defend the 'Scheme' itself and what is said about it. Our pages will be open to all.

A Brief History

Of the Church Union Movement in South India

References

1. The Reports of the Joint Committee.
2. The file of the *United Church Herald*.
3. Minutes of the General Assemblies of the South India United Church.
4. *Documents on Christian Unity*, edited by G. K. A. Bell.
5. *The Christian Task in India*, pages 255–291, by Dr. Palmer.
6. *Church Union in South India*, by E. H. M. Waller, Bishop of Madras.

The story of the development of the Church Union Movement in South India is a long one and to show its real origins one must go back several decades into the history of Indian Missions. That will not be attempted here, nor will we attempt to describe the movement that resulted in the establishment of the All-India Presbyterian Union though that movement arose directly out of the suggestions of the South India Missionary Conference held in Madras in 1900. A similar movement a few years later resulted in the organization of what was called 'The General Union of the United Churches of South

India'. In 1908 this Presbyterian Union in South India and the Congregational Union of the same area amalgamated and formed what has since then been called 'The South India United Church'. In its inception this union was of purely Presbyterian and Congregational elements, but in the year 1919 the Malabar district Churches organized by the Basel Mission of Switzerland entered into this United Church, bringing with them the moderate Lutheran element of the Churches of Southern Germany and Switzerland.

A private attempt to bring the S.I.U.C. and the Anglican Church closer together was made in 1910 when Bishop Whitehead of Madras invited certain leaders of the Anglican Church and of the South India United Church to meet with him in Madras to discuss the question of union. Certain agreements were framed at that time but these were never brought before any official organization of either Church and therefore never saw the light of day, but it indicated that as early as 1910 there was in the minds of some people a real desire for the union of these bodies.

The Conference of 1910

In 1916 there was a movement which sought to unite the S.I.U.C., with the Wesleyans in South India. Though there were many in the Wesleyan Church that desired this union very much it was found that to a very large extent the Indian pastors connected with that Church were not willing at that time to forego their connexion with England nor their distinctively Wesleyan character for the sake of entering into an autonomous Indian Church, and that attempt failed.

Conference with the Wesleyans, 1916

An attempt was also made in November, 1918, to form a united Church in India and representatives from the Presbyterian Church of India, the Congregational Churches of North and West India, and of the S.I.U.C. met together in Allahabad and there framed resolutions and a Confession of Faith but these never became the subject for official action in the various Churches represented. Before that movement could gain a sound footing another had begun that prevented the Christians of South India from taking part in further negotiations for an All-India Church. It was true also in connection with the original Presbyterian union throughout India that those connected with the Presbyterian Churches in South India had from the very beginning taken the position that their union with Presbyterians in other parts of India should not preclude them from uniting them with other Christian bodies nearer home if such opportunities presented themselves and they did therefore sever their connection with the All-India Presbyterian Union and united with Congregational brethren in 1908 to form the South India United Church. Similarly the members of the South India United

All India Union

Church in 1918 and following years felt that further union in South India was of far greater importance to them than what seemed to them a merely theoretical union for the whole of India with bodies already very similar to themselves in polity and doctrine, but distant in geography.

This spirit of the South India leaders made possible the movement that was started by the Tranquebar Conference of May, 1919.

Tranquebar, 1919

The significance of this conference cannot be overrated. It came at the end of three days of deliberation and prayer concerning the work of evangelism. Two days more of conference directly on the subject of Church Union were brought about by the invitation of the Bishop of Dornakal and the Rev. V. Santiago, two Indian leaders, one from the Anglican Church and another from the South India United Church. Wesleyan and Lutheran ministers who were at the Conference on Evangelism were invited to stay for this conference on Union, but they did not see their way clear to do so. However including the two who had called the conference there were seven ordained representatives of the Anglican Church and 26 representatives of the South India United Church. Of the latter one was the Rev. H. A. Popley at that time secretary of the Forward Evangelistic Movement of the S.I.U.C., and another was G. Sherwood Eddy Esq., a Y.M.C.A. Secretary who was visiting India for evangelistic purposes. They were invited to remain to this conference because of their connection with the S.I.U.C. but as far as is known had no official connection with the calling of this conference. There was a connection between the correspondence that took place between the Bishop of London and the Wesleyan Churches in England at that time and the call which the Bishop of Dornakal and Mr. Santiago issued for this conference on union. The Bishop of Dornakal had been so greatly impressed by the movement in England that he felt that the time had come when something should be done in India; hence the conference at Tranquebar.

Those who gathered at Tranquebar stated in their resolutions that they felt that the Congregational, Presbyterian and Episcopal elements should be combined in the forming of a united Church. Anglican members present stated that they must include the principle of the 'historic episcopate' though they asked for no acceptance of any theory as to its character. The S.I.U.C. members stated that they believed in the necessary condition that the episcopate should reassume a constitutional form and that they must also insist on the condition of the recognition of spiritual equality, of the universal priesthood of all believers, and of the rights of the laity in the expression of the Church. The conference further accepted the first three items of the Lambeth Quadrilateral and made further observations concerning some of the

details of these matters and they concluded their findings with a statement that 'while not committing our respective bodies we unofficially and individually with the blessing of God agree to work toward union on such a basis.' (For the full statement of these resolutions see page 278 of Dean Bell's book).

The resolutions accepted at Tranquebar were discussed by a group of missionaries at Kodaikanal that same month. There were 30 missionaries present connected with the S.I.U.C. and, after listening to a speech by Mr. Eddy and discussing the whole question, practically all present welcomed all that had been said and done. All agreed that the time had come for another step forward in Church Union and they expressed their thought on the subject by passing a resolution which though informal and unofficial placed them on record as favouring a united Church in which episcopacy would be the form of Government, 'if desired by Indian Christians and provided that such a united Church when established should be an independent, self-governing Church with no State connection, and with full and free fellowship with all Christians throughout the world who wished such fellowship. (See the United Church Herald of June and July, 1919).

Letter of Syrian Leaders

A word should be said concerning the letter published by Abraham Mar Thoma (Malabar Suffragan), C. P. Phillipose and V. P. Mamman, members of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, Malabar who expressed their personal opinion concerning the desirability of Church Union. Their personal and unofficial action in publishing this letter, however, never led to any action by their Church and hence it was for a long time erroneously thought in the West that the Syrian Church was concerned in these union negotiations whereas they never took any other part in those negotiations than the unofficial writing of this letter by three of their leaders.

S. I. U. C. Assembly, 1919

The official beginning of the South India movement took place in the city of Calicut in September 1919. When the letter issued by those that gathered at Tranquebar was there presented to the General Assembly of the South India United Church it took official action with reference to the union movement. That official action took the form of a resolution in which the General Assembly 'rejoiced to see the growing desire for a united Church in South India and requested its Councils to consider the desirability or otherwise of adopting a constitutional episcopacy

(1) in which the Bishop shall be elected by and responsible to the General Assembly,

(2) in which there shall be a mutual recognition of the absolute

equality of the ministry and of the membership of the uniting Churches, and

(3) in which the resultant church shall be an autonomous and independent entity.'

The Assembly authorized its Secretary to draft a reply on the basis of the answers received from the Councils and appointed a committee who should consider the matter if the action of the Councils was favourable.

In submitting the resolution to the Councils the Assembly suggested three important points which it regarded as essential for any basis of union. In a letter issued by the Executive Committee of that Church in November, 1919, the points raised in the General Assembly's resolution were set forth in detail and in connection with the first resolution it was clearly shown that the acceptance of bishops for the united Church would mean the acceptance of a 'constitutional episcopacy' which would include what was known as 'the historic episcopacy'. It was made perfectly clear to the Councils at that time in this letter that union with the Anglican Church would necessarily include this idea of episcopacy, and that whereas the S.I.U.C. might emphasise the 'constitutionality' of that episcopacy the Anglicans would insist upon its 'historicity'. The other points in the resolutions were also explained in this letter which was signed by all members of the Executive Committee of the S.I.U.C.

In reply to this letter the Councils of the S.I.U.C. expressed their opinions and in the minutes of the 8th General Assembly of the S.I.U.C. which met in Nagercoil in September, 1921, the replies of the various Councils are given showing clearly that the majority of the Councils were in favour of beginning negotiations with the Anglicans for Church Union.

First Meeting of Joint Committee

On the basis of the vote of the Councils the Executive Committee of the South India United Church entered into correspondence with the Anglican Church through the Bishop of Dornakal and as the result of their negotiations a meeting was held of the representatives of the two Churches in the Hudson Memorial Church (Wesleyan), Bangalore, in March 1920. In this meeting the representatives of the two Churches adopted a preamble expressing their position with regard to the negotiations and their agreement on certain items. Also they placed on record the opinions of both the Anglican representatives and South India representatives on certain matters. In the items on which they agreed we find their statements as to the kind of union they felt should be established which would 'express locally the principles of the great Catholic unity in the body of Christ'. They further accepted the Holy Scriptures, the Apostles and Nicene Creed and the two

Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They also said that 'believing that the principle of the historic episcopate in the constitutional form is that which is more likely than any other to promote and preserve the unity of the Church, we accept it as a basis of unity without raising any other questions about episcopacy.' (The full text of these resolutions can be found in Dean Bell's book, page 287.)

It was shortly after this gathering that the Bishops of the Anglican Church went to the Lambeth Conference of 1920. These resolutions were there discussed and had a great influence on the decisions of that conference which became historic through its 'Appeal to All Christian People', and in its resolutions on the subject of Church Union.

Lambeth, 1920

The second meeting of the Joint Committee on Union was held in Bangalore, December, 14-16, 1920. The Anglican Bishops had returned from the Lambeth Conference and were anxious to place before the Committee the findings of that body. They recognized that in the findings of that conference there were certain limitations that perhaps would not be altogether acceptable to the representatives of the S.I.U.C., but Bishop Palmer tried his best to give such a friendly interpretation to those resolutions that they might become the basis of an agreement in South India.

Second Meeting of Joint Committee

The second meeting of the Joint Committee resolved itself very largely into a discussion of the ministry. Largely because of this difficulty it was resolved to limit the sphere of the union movement to South India. It was recognized that there was an inherent inequality in a union between a South India United Church and an All-India Anglican Church. It was also recognized that in the South India area these two Churches occupied a limited territory and that their membership came from a people that was homogeneous in race, language and customs. Hence it was resolved that the area of the union should be limited to the four southern dioceses of the Anglican Church and to the area occupied by the S.I.U.C. In the words of the resolutions of this meeting 'the membership of the Churches in this area is preponderatingly Indian and the Churches concerned are linked together by language, and race, and form a natural regional Church.'

In view of the Lambeth decisions regarding re-ordination the Anglican delegates found it very difficult to agree to any decision which would recognize the ministry of the S.I.U.C. in any real sense and the best that that meeting could do was to draw up an agreement concerning the ministry which would give to the Church after union a dual ministry, only part of which would be recognized throughout the whole Church. It is not surprising that these resolutions were

not acceptable to the S.I.U.C. even though the committee felt that at that time they were the best arrangements that could be made.

Third Meeting of Joint Committee

The third meeting of the Joint Committee was held in Madras in June 1921. At that meeting various sub-committees reported submitting drafts on the government of the Church, the powers of the Bishop, Creeds, Confirmation, Freedom of worship, and inter-communion. In some respects the discussions of this meeting were largely academic and dealt with details of organization and other arrangements without touching upon some of the vital questions that were of much deeper concern than these outward matters.

General Assembly, 1921

The report of the second and third meetings of the Joint Committee was made to the S.I.U.C. by its Committee on Union in September, 1921. The committee realised that it had a difficult task before it in trying to show the General Assembly that the resolutions adopted by the Joint Committee could afford a basis of union. There was a good deal of opposition to the resolutions concerning the ministry. After a very thorough discussion of the whole subject the General Assembly did pass a resolution expressing its opinion 'that the S.I.U.C. should be willing, for the sake of doing what it can to forward the cause of union in Christendom, to accept a Constitutional Episcopacy as defined in its resolution of September, 1919; and at the same time that it express its position that the S.I.U.C. cannot enter a union which will cut it off from those Churches with which it is now in full communion. It treasures its present catholicity too highly to take any step that would diminish or destroy the fellowship which it now enjoys with Evangelical Christendom.'

The Assembly further submitted the report of the Committee on Union to the Church Councils connected with it and requested them to study the matter very carefully. It continued its committee on union and authorized them to go ahead with its negotiations, but it was perfectly evident that some of the findings of the Joint Committee were not acceptable to the Assembly.

This became even more manifest as the resolutions of the various Church Councils were received. The S.I.U.C. was not willing to go into a union in which its ministry would be under such palpable limitations as were involved in the resolutions of the second meeting of the Joint Committee. The desire for union was exceedingly strong in the Church and it would be willing to do almost anything in order that union might be brought about, still it could not accept these arrangements.

The next meeting of the Joint Committee was held at Pasumalai in April, 1923. At this meeting it was fully realized that the previous resolutions on the ministry were not satisfactory and that therefore something else must be done. The result was found in a recommendation for a Commissioning Service. Such a service had been discussed before, but had been rejected because it was felt by the S.I.U.C. representatives that it practically implied reordination. Further study of the subject and the deliberations of these few days convinced the members of the S.I.U.C. Committee that a Commissioning Service could be arranged which would not be reordination or the repudiation of any previous ordination. All except perhaps one representative of the Anglican Church agreed in this matter and hence such a service of Commissioning was drawn up.

Fourth Meeting of Joint Committee

It was found, however, when this was submitted to the Churches, that it was unsatisfactory both to the S.I.U.C. and to the Anglicans. To the ministry of the S.I.U.C. it looked too much like a service of re-ordination with the laying on of hands of the bishops. On the other hand to many Anglicans it was not a service of ordination and hence unsatisfactory. Consequently when these resolutions came before the two Churches they were rejected as fruitful of misunderstanding and not accomplishing what was really intended. It might be added that this attempt at a Commissioning Service was very largely the result of a letter received from Prof. Vernon Bartlet, D.D. of Mansfield College, Oxford, who suggested that in the Church after union there should be a real union of the ministries of the Presbyterian, Congregational and Episcopal forms of Church government and that this Church after union should be able to show that its whole ministry was really a continuation of such an amalgamation. Hence he also recommended that in the consecration of the first Bishops of the new Church the presbyters of the S.I.U.C. should take part in that service in order that these bishops should represent all elements in the ministry of the uniting Churches.

A Commissioning Service

After this fourth meeting a new element came into the negotiations. At the General Assembly held in Ceylon in 1923 the S.I.U.C. invited other Churches in South India who were interested in the question of union to come into the union movement with them. In response to that invitation the Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Church came into this movement and from 1925 on their representatives have sat with the representatives of the S.I.U. and Anglican Churches. The coming in of the Wesleyans brought in a new element of spiritual vigour and enthusiasm, a strong sense of the guidance of the Holy Spirit and an

Wesleyans enter Negotiations

emphasis upon lay leadership that was perhaps not found in the other Churches. Their representatives have certainly taken a very active and a very vital share in all the negotiations from that day on and have greatly enriched those negotiations.

Fifth Meeting

The fifth meeting of the Joint Committee was held in Madras in February, 1925. At this meeting the Wesleyan representatives were also present. The work of the Committee was largely to review the findings of previous meetings and to get the Wesleyan agreement to these findings. This enabled the Committee to review its whole work and to put what had already been accepted by both Churches into more or less permanent form. These resolutions have become the foundation of the final 'Proposed Scheme for Union' that has been published.

Sixth Meeting

A sixth meeting was held in Trichinopoly in 1926 where again representatives from the three Churches met together. It was at this meeting that the Commissioning Service was finally rejected and an attempt made to find a substitute for it. The problem became a very difficult one and no easy solution was discovered. Finally a resolution was adopted which looked to a period of fifty years during which there would be really a dual ministry, but it was felt by many that this was most unsatisfactory and to some it looked as though the negotiations must speedily come to an end.

Lausanne

However in the summer of 1927 the World Conference on Faith and Order was held in Lausanne and the spirit there engendered brought to South India through the nine delegates who were present a new enthusiasm and a new determination that they must go forward in this great work.

Another element must also not be forgotten. During the eight years that their negotiations had already lasted, the members of the Committee had regularly, every day of the meetings, worshipped together. They had come to the Lord's Table together. They had spent much time in prayer and in the reading of God's Word. They had day by day left their differences behind them and they had ascended to a higher realm where the things of the Spirit were in control and there they had found a unity that was not so manifest below. A consciousness of that unity drove them on in their work in a way that they would not have dared to go if they had not found this inner union. They could really say that they had had spiritual experiences together which they craved for the whole body of their fellow Christians and hence there was born a courage and a conviction that led them on though they were not always sure of the way along which they were going.

It was in this spirit that the seventh meeting of the Joint Committee was held in Bangalore in late June, 1928. Forty members representing the three Churches were present. The deliberations lasted six days. It was realised by all that as far as the Committee was concerned it was here beginning its final work. All other meetings were 'preliminary'. No attempt to draft a complete scheme had before been attempted. That attempt was now begun and with the appointment of a Continuation Committee of ten members a means was provided by which sub-committees could do constructive work between meetings of the full body. The Bangalore meeting is often taken by people abroad, especially, as a final action of the Joint Committee and not a little criticism of the Committee's Findings has been based on the Bangalore resolutions. These, however, while in no sense 'Preliminary' were not complete, for the Committee at once appointed sub-committees to continue the work of Bangalore and to report at another meeting to be held within a few months. In the meantime the Continuation Committee went on with its work. A special meeting was held in Madras in early January, 1929, when provision was made for the drafting of certain documents as well as for the examination of documents already drafted. It was further decided to hold the final meeting of the Joint Committee in February, 1929.

Seventh Meeting

That meeting was held in Madras at the time appointed. There were 42 members of the Committee present and the Committee spent ten days on its work. The reports of the sub-committees were carefully studied, criticised, and revised and the attempt was made to prepare a unified Scheme which would give to the world a clear idea of what it was proposed to do. The report of this meeting has been issued under the title of 'Proposed Scheme of Union' and was first published by the Christian Literature Society of Madras and later by the S.P.C.K., London. The full text was also published in the *Guardian* of London. Many thousands of these copies have been distributed and great interest has been elicited throughout the world.

In undertaking the work the Joint Committee on Union from the very beginning realised that it was attempting that which seemed to be impossible in former days. All through its negotiations the Committee felt the leadership of the Holy Spirit and at no point did any one on the Committee seek to impose his views upon the committee but the object held up at all times and by all individuals on the Committee was the welfare of the united Church which was to be established. The question was not so much what was held of value in the past but what is of value for the future. Though every effort was made to keep the whole world in view, it is true that the Committee could not ignore the fact that it was negotiating directly for the union of the

three bodies concerned and in some respects that fact may have modified the 'Scheme'. Had Lutherans or Baptists been associated in the negotiations no doubt there would have been slight changes in the 'Scheme'. But nevertheless the Committee all the way through tried to remain true to the principle that it is establishing a part of the Church Universal and that it wished to give such an expression to that part that it should be quite possible for union movements in other parts of the world to move forward in the same direction and ultimately come to the same result.

Three fundamental principles that have guided the Committee all through its deliberations are the following:

1. The Church after union should be a real spiritual home for all its ministers and members in which each can worship and serve God according to the dictates of his own conscience.

2. The Church after union must be such that no one entering it should feel that by so doing he had cut himself off from his former Christian fellowship. That fellowship must continue in the resultant Church.

3. The Church after union must be an independent, self-governing body over which no State, Church or Society has any authority, though this Church will try to keep in fellowship with other parts of the Church universal.

Should this Scheme be adopted for South India the Committee feels that its work would not then be completed. The Committee and those behind it desire that the movement should go forward. They have no desire whatever to establish a new Church. What they desire is to eliminate the various Churches and bring them again into complete fellowship and organic union. Hence the Committee is anxious that the 'Proposed Scheme' should be criticised and improved so that it may indeed become the basis of union for others also, first in India, then in other Mission fields and finally in Europe and America. The Committee has no illusions about the difficulty of such a programme, but in dreaming such a dream the Committee is thinking more of what ought to be and what can be under the guidance of the Holy Spirit than what seems possible merely through the work of men.

Should the 'Proposed Scheme of Union' either as it is or in a modified form be accepted the Committee will go forward with its task and work out further details which will in many cases do away with certain criticisms that have been offered. As soon as the united Church has been organized in South India the Committee will approach Christian bodies in Northern India with the hope that negotiations may be carried on for the establishment of an All-India Church. In the mean time they hope that Persia and China also will move forward so that this movement may not stop until many of the

present separate denominations have been merged into one Church. Our vision ultimately includes all, though we recognise the hard fact that certain sections of the Christian world are so sure that they are completely right that they cannot unite with others. But we still believe that the Spirit of the Almighty Himself can brood over this deep also and bring forth new life and new love for the future.

Resolutions adopted by the Assembly of the South India United Church

OCTOBER, 1929

Report of Special Committee on Church Union

Resolved that the following report of the Committee be received and sent to the Councils with the 'Proposed Scheme of Union' prepared by the Joint Committee on Union for their consideration and action.

I. The Assembly adopted the following resolutions:

1. Resolved to recommend to the Church Councils the Scheme of Union for their careful study, and to suggest that wherever possible members of the Joint Committee, both Anglican and Wesleyan, be invited to the meetings of the Councils to explain any matter in the Scheme that may seem ambiguous.

2. In referring the Scheme to the Councils the Assembly desires to make the observation that if a union of our Church with the Anglican and the Wesleyan Churches is to be accomplished that can be done only by formulating a Scheme which will secure that the Church will be a common spiritual home for the various schools of thought and practice in the uniting bodies on a basis of mutual toleration and respect, and not by attempting to secure uniformity.

II. Resolved that, in the light of the discussion, the Assembly recommend that the Councils consider the desirability of adopting the following modifications of the Scheme and declarations:

1. That paragraph 1 in Sec. III (B) be modified by deleting the words—'without intending—episcopacy', and adding instead the following sentence:

'In doing so they declare their intention that no particular theory regarding episcopacy shall become the official doctrine of the united Church; and they do not commit themselves to the position that

episcopal ordination is the dividing line between a valid and an invalid ministry.'

The paragraph would then read as follow:

'The uniting Churches, recognising that the episcopate, the councils of the presbyters, and the congregation of the faithful must all have their appropriate places in the order of life of the united Church, accept in particular the historic episcopate in a constitutional form as part of their basis of union. In so doing they declare their intention that no particular theory regarding episcopacy shall become the official doctrine of the united Church; and they do not commit themselves to the position that episcopal ordination is the dividing line between a valid and an invalid ministry.'

2. That a provision be incorporated in the Scheme that presbyters shall take part along with the bishops in all subsequent consecrations of bishops and not only at the consecration of the first bishops, and that the relevant clauses in Sec. III and VII be suitably modified.

3. That in accepting paragraph (2) Sec. IV B, we declare that it is not our intention that the freedom of inter-communion and intercelebration shall be restricted to any section of the Church or to the life time of the original ministers and members of the Churches entering the union, and that with a view to making this clear we suggest that in the last line of the first sentence of the paragraph the words 'these churches' be inserted in place of 'they'.

The paragraph would then read as follows:

'While such authority must inhere in the united Church, it is the deliberate intention of the uniting Churches that none of the ministers or members of the united Church shall because of the union forego any rights with regard to intercommunion and intercelebration which these Churches possessed before the union.'

4. That in paragraph 2 of Sec. IV B (6), the following addition be made to the last sentence—'provided that the status of those who by that time have already been admitted shall not be affected'.

The sentence would then read as follows:

'After this period of thirty years, the united Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry, provided that the status of those who by that time have already been admitted shall not be affected.'

5. That no minister of the united Church shall be restrained from inviting to the Lord's Table members of other Churches who are communicants in good standing.

6. That while there is provision for the autonomy of the individual church in the Scheme, we understand from Sec. VII, Part I. A. 4 that there will be opportunity in the framing of the rules of the

Diocesan Councils for giving due consideration to the views of the local churches.

7. That in regard to Sec. VII, Part I A. 3 we desire to state that if the bishop is not satisfied with the declaration of faith of a candidate for ordination, he shall consult the other bishops of the Church before making a decision.

8. That in regard to the powers of the synod, after the bishops have stayed action in the synod as in Sec. VIII C (7) the matter thus stayed shall be dealt with in accordance with the principles laid down in Sec. XIII-A.

9. That with a view to reassuring those in the Church who are afraid that within a short time after the union the Synod might by a majority take action which would be contrary to the principles which at the time of union belong to one or other of the uniting Churches, it is hereby declared that it is contrary to the intention of those who make the union that any question in which the uniting Churches as such are divided or have differing practices (such as admission to communicant membership) be brought up within 30 years from the date of union.

Wesleyan Methodist Church

South India Provincial Synod Resolutions on Church Union

JANUARY, 1930

1. The Provincial Synod receives (*a*) the Report of its Committee on Church Union, (*b*) the Proposed Scheme of Union between the Anglican, the South India United Church, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and (*c*) the Reports of the District Synods on that Scheme; and offers grateful thanks to Almighty God for the spirit of fellowship manifested and the large measure of understanding and sympathetic co-operation achieved.

2. Without any reference to the Scheme or the Reports from the District Synods, it was agreed, on the suggestion of the Chairman, that a vote should be taken on the general question of Church Union and the following resolution was passed:

'The Provincial Synod believes that organic union is in the interest of the Kingdom of God in South India.' (Vote—32 for, 5 against, 3 neutral).

3. The Scheme was then considered and the following resolutions were passed:

(*a*) The Provincial Synod believes that on the whole the proposed Scheme of Union indicates a hopeful way of achieving a United Church in South India, but before the Synod is prepared to accept it considerable modifications will be necessary. (Vote—34 for, 4 against, 3 neutral).

(*b*) The following are some of the modifications which the Synod considers desirable:

(1) *With reference to the Episcopacy:*

(i) Whilst we recognise that different views on the subject of Apostolic Succession may be held by members of the United Church, there should be a more definite and explicit statement that it is not the intention of the scheme that Apostolic Succession shall be a doctrine of the United Church. (See resolution from the Trichinopoly Synod and the resolutions of the S.I.U.C. Assembly.)

(ii) There should be, in the written constitution, a clearer definition and limitation of the powers of the Bishop, including his power of veto, and the reception and stationing of ministers. (See Madras District resolution 3 (*b*), and Trichinopoly District resolution 4.)

(iii) Power should be given to a Diocesan Council to express its opinion, at regular intervals, to the Synod, as to whether it is in the interests of the work of God for its Bishop to continue in office in the diocese. (See Madras resolution 3 (*a*).)

(iv) There should be a definite statement that no further ordination shall be required of any minister previous to his consecration as a Bishop. (See Mysore District resolution.)

(2) *With reference to the Ministry*: That whilst we agree 'that eventually every minister exercising a permanent ministry in the United Church will be an episcopally ordained minister', we do not thereby cease to recognise the validity of the ministry of non-episcopal churches.

4. The Provincial Synod reappoints its Committee on Church Union, and instructs it to collect and systematize the above, and any other suggestions that may be brought to its notice, for the guidance of our representatives in any possible future meeting of the Joint Committee, and for presenting a further report to the District and Provincial Synods.

5. As the Scheme of Union is now available, the Provincial Synod urges that in each District all possible assistance shall be given, so that there may be a thorough understanding of the scheme by our people.

6. The Provincial Synod will have to ask the Missionary Committee at a later stage to request the Conference to give an indication of its attitude on the following:

(*a*) The status of the ministers of our Church (both Indian and

English) who shall enter the United Church, in relation to the Methodist Conference in England.

(*b*) The position of ministers who shall in future be ordained in the United Church, in relation to the Methodist Church in England.

(*c*) The relation—spiritual, administrative and financial—of the Missionary Committee, after the Union, to the missionary work now carried on by the Wesleyan Methodist Church in South India.

In the meantime the Standing Committee is instructed to give its attention to the subject and to report to the next Synod.

7. The Provincial Synod re-affirms the following resolution of the Synod of 1929 with reference to 'inter-communion', and instructs that it be sent at once to the Episcopal Provincial Synod now meeting in Calcutta, with the suggestion that it would be in accordance with the spirit of the Lambeth Appeal if unfettered fellowship in the Holy Communion as between the three consulting Churches in South India were encouraged even before Union takes place.

'In our judgment, it will help greatly to increase the spirit of unity between the consulting Churches, and within our own Church to win the mind of our people, if, even before Union is consummated, united worship and especially inter-communion between the consulting Churches can be made possible. The absence of inter-communion at this time constitutes a most formidable obstacle to union in the minds of many of our people.'

8. The Synod appoints the Rev. W. E. Tomlinson to take the place of the Rev. H. Gulliford on the Continuation Committee of the Joint Committee. If an emergency meeting of the Joint Committee is called this year, which is not likely, the three members of the Continuation Committee belonging to our Church—Messrs. Ponnaiya, Hooper and Tomlinson—are empowered to select the delegates, with the instruction to preserve continuity in the delegation as far as possible.

9. The Committee on Church Union shall consist of the Chairman and Secretary of the Provincial Synod, the Chairmen of Districts, Revs. J. W. S. Rungaswamy, S. A. Vedanayagam, J. J. Ellis, A. C. Hall, N. G. Ponnaiya, P. S. Rangaramanujam, F. C. Sackett, E. L. Ananta Rao, W. E. Tomlinson, F. Whittaker, M. B. Taylor, M. Mehta, P. Gurushanta, G. S. Marris; Miss Horwood, Messrs. S. Gnanapragasam, W. Jeevaratnam, K. Mon Singh, J. R. Sivasubramaniam, with Rev. J. S. M. Hooper (convener).

Resolutions

Concerning the proposed scheme of Church Union in South India passed by the General Council of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon at its fourth session, 1930

Prefatory Note by the Episcopal Synod

In publishing these resolutions on behalf of the General Council the Episcopal Synod desires to make it clear that the purpose of the Council was not to pass a final verdict upon the Scheme of Union, but to state as clearly and frankly as it could its own opinion at the present stage, and at the same time to give instructions for the guidance of its delegates, when they should resume their work upon the Joint Committee.

There were two chief reasons why the Council did not wish to issue anything in the way of a final verdict. The first reason was that the Lambeth Conference is about to meet, and the Council considered that in such an important matter as this Scheme of Union it should not attempt to arrive at final conclusions until the General Council and also the Diocesan Councils which are yet to pronounce upon the scheme had availed themselves of the counsel which that body would be able to give. The other reason was that the Council was deeply conscious that the Holy Spirit by inspiring the Joint Committee with mutual trust and common desire to learn the truth as God should reveal it had enabled its members, who started with many and great divergences of thought and tradition, to arrive at agreement on a great many important points; and therefore wished to shew by the terms of its Resolutions its belief that the continuance of such discussions is the surest and quickest way to ensure that the uniting Churches shall reach such real agreement upon all essential points as is necessary for a true and stable union.

But, though these Resolutions do not claim to be a final and unalterable expression of opinion by the General Council, yet they do represent a real common mind at which it arrived during its Fourth Session. The First Resolution of brotherly greeting was passed unanimously when the Scheme was received and before the Council proceeded to its detailed consideration. The Second Resolution was the fruit of three full days' discussion of the whole Scheme. Except

for one small item which was passed with two dissentient votes, every part of this Resolution was adopted either unanimously or *nemine contradicente* by the Bishops, Clergy and Laity voting together; and the Resolution thus indicates a solid and united opinion which the Council reached during a period when it was humbly conscious of being guided by the Holy Spirit into common understanding and agreement.

The Episcopal Synod is asking the Lambeth Conference to give its opinion and advice both on the Scheme as at present proposed and on the Resolutions passed by the General Council. The Synod also intends to ask the advice of the Conference on certain points, chiefly of a technical nature, upon which the Council and the Synod did not feel themselves competent to offer an opinion without seeking further counsel.

Signed on behalf of the Episcopal Synod,

(Sd.) FOSS CALCUTTA.

Calcutta.
10th February, 1930.

RESOLUTION I

The Members of the General Council of the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon desire, on the occasion of receiving the Draft Scheme of Union prepared by the delegations of the Wesleyan and South India United Churches with their own delegation to send a greeting to those Churches. They wish them to know that equally with them they are earnestly desirous of promoting that unity of His people for which Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed and they are supremely thankful to God for the manifest working of His Spirit in the Churches in India and for the spirit of sympathy, mutual trust, and of loyalty to the truth which has characterised the negotiations throughout. They would assure them that they themselves desire no less than the other negotiating Churches to shew this same spirit and while earnestly exploring every approach to unity, to bring into the united Church whatever of truth they have inherited. They request the Churches to unite with them in earnest prayer that all whose counsel will be sought whether in the Lambeth Conference or in the Councils of Churches in England and America may be guided by the Holy Spirit, and that the negotiating Churches in India may be found worthy to restore in this part of the Church, at least, the broken unity of the Body of Christ.

RESOLUTION II

The General Council recognizes with great thankfulness that the Joint Committee has been guided by Almighty God to base the Scheme of Union upon the acknowledgement of essential truths and principles of the Christian Religion which the Church has ever held; namely, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and of the Incarnation of the Son of God, the authority of the Holy Scriptures, the Creeds as witnessing to and safeguarding the Faith, the two Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Communion, and Christ's gift of the Ministry of His Church.

It observes with equal thankfulness that the Committee has been guided to seek the achievement of union by unifying the Ministry through adoption of the rule of episcopal ordination; and it desires to express its grateful appreciation of the service which has been rendered to the common cause by those who have been willing to change their customs in order to make this possible.

The Council believes that the Committee has thus been led to produce a situation in which it is possible to proceed towards the realization of that union which our Blessed Lord desires His people to have without passing judgment upon any particular form of Ministry or view of the Ministry. It believes that the Committee has thus been enabled to bring the negotiations into an atmosphere of mutual love and trust in which all can be sensible that the things which they accept and hold in common outweigh all differences that still remain. It, therefore, heartily welcomes and endorses the suggestion of the Committee that consciences should be safeguarded and long-established traditions preserved by the exchange of a solemn pledge in the spirit of mutual trust rather than by the framing of detailed regulations.

The Council desires to affirm that it regards all this as affording manifest evidence of the guidance and blessing of Almighty God upon the labours of the Joint Committee, and to declare its confident and thankful belief that He who has led the Uniting Churches thus far will continue to bless and guide them until the goal is reached to which all so earnestly desire to attain.

In this belief and hope the General Council directs its Delegates to continue their work on the Joint Committee. It makes below some statements of opinion on certain important points, and also gives instructions to its delegates with regard to certain suggestions which it desires them to convey to the Joint Committee in the belief that some of them indicate things which are essential parts of that full Catholic heritage which all desire to make their own, that others indicate things which, if accepted by all, would greatly enrich the life of the United Church, and that others again suggest ways in which some

statements in the Scheme might be so modified or enlarged as to remove doubts from the minds of some and to render clearer to all the purpose and meaning of the provisions contained in it.

Opinions and Instructions

1. Proposed Scheme of Union: Section III (A) pp. 3-4.

Opinion

Subject to the two Instructions given below the Council is prepared to accept the whole of the statement on Faith and Order contained in Section III (A).

Instructions

(*a*) The delegates are instructed to ask that the wording of para. 4 should be so modified as to bring it more into consonance with the language of this Church when it declares these two Sacraments to be 'generally necessary to salvation'.

(*b*) The delegates are instructed to endeavour to secure a re-wording of the latter part of paragraph 5 so that it shall be sufficiently clear that the unworthiness of the minister does not hinder the effect of the Sacrament.

2. Section III (B) pp. 4-5.

Opinion

Subject to the Instruction given below the Council is prepared to accept the statement upon the Episcopate in the United Church contained in Section III (B).

Instruction

The attention of the delegates is called to the desirability of some redrafting of the words at the end of paragraph 1.

3. Section III (C) pp. 5-6.

Opinion

In view of the misunderstandings that have arisen and the fears that have been expressed from various sides in regard to the provisions in the Scheme for the Initial Ministry of the United Church, which secure to all existing ministers the continuance in that Church of their ministry of the Word and Sacraments, the Council thinks it wise to state that in heartily approving these provisions it does not intend that the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon should commit itself to the principle of the equally certain validity of all ministries; and it realises that the Churches uniting with that Church do not demand that it should do so, and similarly it is not demanded that by accepting the limitations contained in these provisions the other Uniting Churches should be considered to have endorsed any particular theory of the ministry.

4. Section III (E) pp. 6-7.

Opinion

The Council, recognizing the value of the principle of freedom in worship and sharing the desire for the development of forms of worship suited to India, is prepared to accept the provisions concerning the worship of the United Church contained in Sections III (E) and IX (A).

5. Section IV (A) pp. 8-9.

Opinion

The Council agrees that none of the existing Churches should cease to enjoy such privileges of fellowship with other Churches as they enjoyed before the Union.

In view of the fact that the full Communion existing between the Anglican Churches is a fellowship of a somewhat different nature from the communion and fellowship existing between the Free Churches, the Council does not feel itself competent at this stage to decide upon the eventual corporate relationship that might exist between the United Church and other Churches. In regard to this the United Church on its part will make its own decision when the time comes.

The General Council desires to obtain the opinion of the Lambeth Conference on the whole question of inter-communion in such a situation.

6. Section IV (B) pp. 9-11.

Opinion

The Council welcomes the principle of safeguarding consciences and preserving the long-established traditions of the Uniting Churches by means of mutual trust and solemn pledge rather than by definite regulations. It is ready to endorse the pledge proposed in the present form of the Scheme in the belief that it safeguards the consciences of all members of the Uniting Churches from being forced by any future administrative acts to accept during the interim period ministries and modes of worship which are definitely contrary to their long-established traditions and beliefs, and in particular provides that the rule which the Anglican Church has inherited that an episcopally ordained ministry is required for the Sacrament of Holy Communion will be preserved for those congregations which have in the past been bound by that rule.

Instructions

(*a*) The Council instructs its delegates to explain its position as stated above to the Joint Committee, in order that when the Scheme is finally drafted the meaning of the pledge may, in whatever manner

may seem most suitable, be made plain both to those who shall hereafter be directly concerned and to others who may not be familiar with the circumstances.

(*b*) The delegates are instructed to ask that the words 'and expectation' may be omitted from the second line of IV B. 6, and that in the last line but two on that page the word 'temporary' may be substituted for the word 'such'.

7. Section IV (C) p. 12

Opinions

(*a*) The General Council is willing to give to the Southern Dioceses of the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon such autonomy as may be needed for the full development of the United Church in the hope that further unions will be effected in the near future and that ultimately the Church of all India may be able to function as one.

At the same time it greatly desires that from the first there should be a common Consultative Council representative of the Northern Dioceses and the United Church for the discussion of common problems and the furtherance of plans for all India and that thus should be secured the growth of that unity of thought and work which all desire.

(*b*) The General Council is bound by the Indian Church Act and Measure and the Statutory Rules to have a General Council for all India to fulfil certain legal obligations in relation to the Establishment of Chaplains, the Maintained Churches, and the Indian Church Trustees. For that purpose, the Dioceses of the United Church must continue to send to a General Council representatives charged with these duties and that General Council must have such authority over the affairs of the Maintained Churches as may be necessary for the discharge of those functions; and Bishops of the United Church who may be appointed to the superintendence of Maintained Churches must agree to conform to the obligations entailed by that position, and must agree not so to act as to involve the Northern Dioceses in any conflict with the Secretary of State as to the fulfilment or nonfulfilment of the agreement contained in the Statutory Rules. Subject to these necessary limitations the General Council agrees that it should claim no jurisdiction over the affairs of the United Church.

Instructions

(*a*) The Council instructs its delegates to consult the Joint Committee as to the possibility of combining the attendance at meetings of a General Council of representatives from the United Church (as mentioned in opinion (*b*)) with the meeting of a Consultative Council such as that suggested in opinion (*a*),

(*b*) The delegates are instructed to emphasise the need of eliminating from the final form of the Scheme any phrase which might seem to suggest a breaking of communion between those dioceses which will be included in the United Church and the other dioceses of the present Province; and to this end to ask that the words 'absence of organic union' should not appear in this connection.

8. Section VI (5) p. 17

Opinion

The General Council considers it of great importance that the United Church should adopt as early as possible the primitive and scriptural practice of the laying on of hands with prayer for the Holy Spirit, the rite of Confirmation, (not meaning thereby that the Anglican rite need be followed in detail) which was from the first considered naturally to follow Baptism and has proved of inestimable spiritual value to the Churches which have maintained it.

The Council desires that all who have been admitted to Communicant status by any of the services of admission now in use in the Uniting Churches shall be recognized as communicants of the United Church and that pending the adoption of the rite of laying on of hands with prayer for the Holy Spirit in confirmation, such recognition of communicants shall be continued.

9. Section VII (A) pp. 18-21.

Instruction

The delegates are instructed to ask that reference be made to the authority of the Episcopal Body to publish pronouncements or instructions on matters of Faith and Order.

10. Section VII (B) pp. 22-23.

Instruction

The delegates are instructed to represent to the Joint Committee the desire of the General Council that when the election of a Bishop is confirmed by the Executive Committee, a two-thirds majority of all the Bishops entitled to vote should be required.

11. Section VII (C) pp. 23-24.

Instruction

The delegates are instructed to inform the Joint Committee that the Council desires to see included among the duties of Presbyters that of seeking to bring sinners to repentance and forgiveness through the ministry of reconciliation.

12. Section IX (B) pp. 35-37.

Instruction

The delegates are instructed to suggest to the Joint Committee that paragraph (5) on pages 36-37 be redrafted to run as follows:

'*The Thanksgiving* for God's glory and goodness and the redemptive work of Christ in His birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension, leading on to a reference to His institution of the Sacrament, in which His own words are rehearsed, and to the setting apart of the bread and wine to be used for the purpose of the Sacrament with prayer that we may receive thereby that which our Lord intends to give us in this Sacrament'.

EPISCOPAL SYNOD

Twelfth Day, 10th February, 1930

4. (*a*) Resolved to ask the Metropolitan to forward to the Lambeth Conference the Proposed Scheme of Church Union in South India together with the Resolutions passed concerning it by the General Council at its fourth session, asking the Conference for its opinion both upon the Scheme as framed and upon the opinions which the General Council has expressed; and also asking for advice and guidance with regard to the points mentioned below.

1. Consecration per saltum;
2. The necessity for Confirmation before being made (*a*) Priest and (*b*) Bishop;
3. In the Consecration of Bishops whether Presbyters may take part in the laying of hands (*a*) in the inaugural service and (*b*) in other consecrations;
4. Whether it is in order for the Bishops to grant authorisations to non-episcopally ordained ministers, as might occur in the case of some missionaries.

Christian Bhakti in the United Church

By Rev. A. J. APPASAMY, Ph. D.Litt.

All those who are advocating or criticising with vigour the Proposed Scheme of Union are concerned with one great question: Will the Scheme lead the Church in South India to a fuller and richer spiritual life? Will it enable her to develop into the strong and deeply spiritual body of Christ as she is meant to be? In other words, will there spring up in South India as a result of the present Proposed Scheme a new and vigorous growth of Christian *bhakti*? This is not a question of merely academic interest. It is a vital question and the answer which each individual gives to it will determine the quality

of the enthusiasm with which he supports the Scheme. Recently the following paragraph appeared with reference to the United Church in Canada. 'Within the United Church there exists considerable anxiety about the vigour of its own spiritual life. The period of controversy and establishment is mainly over, the house is set up, and the question arises whether it provides a home for the soul. The earnest questioning attests that all is not satisfactory but that deadness is not general.'[1] A note like this leads us to ask with a great deal of care and anxiety the question as to what spiritual possibilities are actually latent in the Scheme.

I

As a result of the earnest and careful thought which is being bestowed in certain quarters on the Scheme, one thing is becoming evident, and it is that there will be a fresh and deep rethinking of all the issues involved. A Church that is brought up only on Anglican traditions is apt to take all Anglican traditions for granted. The traditions which have been accepted and followed for decades are apt to assert their power over the present. The legal connection of the Indian Church with the Church in England has been broken by an act of Parliament and it is some months since the independent life of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon has been inaugurated. Certain legal changes in the ownership of property have been made but no great enthusiasm has been evoked in the hearts of Anglicans in India nor have any new lines of procedure in worship and organization been yet set on foot. This is because the old Anglican traditions are still powerful. Probably the same will be true of the Wesleyan Church. Even if all connexion between the Wesleyan Church in India and the Wesleyan Church in England should be sundered, the established beliefs and traditions of Wesleyans would command a considerable influence in India. The same may be true of the traditions connected with the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches.

But the moment different Churches which have moved along different lines in the past come together, there will be a great upheaval of thought and belief. South India will become a spiritual melting pot. Various currents of thought will claim acceptance and there will be conflicting interests and beliefs. The Christian in South India will be face to face with a series of ideas and practices, each with a distinct history and each insisting upon its importance. The presence of these manifold ways of life, which no longer follow different directions but which meet together and challenge men to walk along them, will drive every one to a fuller consideration of their relative values. Formerly

[1] *The Christian Century*, April 16, 1930.

if a man was brought up as a Wesleyan he was apt to consider the particular ways of his Church as entirely sound and correct. If he was an Anglican he was prone to regard the thought and practice of his Church as wholly satisfying. But this movement in a narrow groove is no longer possible. Anglicans are forced to investigate once again the foundations of all that they count dear, for they are being forced to give a reason for the hope that is in them. Presbyterians have in the same way to make clear to themselves and to others in what measure the convictions which they have all along accepted as true are correct and how they may enrich their own outlook with elements of value derived from the outlook of other Christians who have been brought up differently.

This point may now be illustrated in detail. The Anglican is entirely in favour of written prayers, the Free Church usage has been very largely in favour of extempore prayers. In the United Church of South India when both Anglicans and Free Churchmen come together they will canvass the comparative importance of written and extempore prayers and arrive at some common practice. Again, the Anglican practice has been to emphasise the value of historic creeds while some Free Churchmen do not want to express their modern convictions in terms of ancient creeds. In the united Church of South India the comparative merits of historic and new creeds will be gone into and some practice will become established which will meet with a sure response from the hearts of the people. Again, in the Anglican Church it has been the practice to centralize spiritual authority in a few trusted persons whereas in the Free Churches the practice has been to keep a great deal of authority in the hands of the congregation or in the hands of synods and assemblies. In South India this question of how much authority should be held by councils and how much vested in persons would be fully considered and some practice established which will meet the peculiar circumstances of India. No longer will certain practices prevail because they have prevailed all along. Every effort will be made to understand the value of diverse practices and doctrines and to accept all such as are found to be in harmony with the mind of Christ and helpful to the people of this country. Thus new usages will emerge and as they have taken shape in India to suit her special conditions they will have great value. While any one of these things, the use of written or unwritten prayers, the use of historic or modern creeds, the investment of authority in a few leaders or its exercise by councils, may not be matters of any great importance, at least when considered in their relation to the fundamentals of the Christian faith, they are valuable helps towards the maintenance of a corporate spiritual life. So long as we believe in the necessity for helping the development of a common spiritual life among all those who name the

name of Christ in India, we should take particular care to develop all such possible aids.

One of the remarkable things about life in America to-day is its abundant vitality and force. In the United States there is taking place before our very eyes the construction of a new and vigorous social order. A people characterised by an extraordinary zest for life are now engaged there in the task of setting up a great fabric of social and political activity. It is being recognized by all thinking men that the vital reason for this emergence of a new social order in the United States of America is the mingling of different racial stocks and of different cultures. From various countries of Europe there have settled in America, during the last three or four hundred years, millions of emigrants each carrying with him a stock of long-inherited ideas and practices. There has been a free mixing of the various racial strains and along with this physical blending there has been an intellectual and social blending. The result is that a new and vigorous life is coming into existence. In some such way, though no doubt in a different measure, the blending of the various traditions of the Christian Church on the ancient soil of India will result in a powerful spiritual movement. When people begin to think for themselves there is sure to be life. There is stagnation where there is not independent thinking. But where there is a definite marshalling of the mental energies of man in quest of new formulations, a period of vigorous life will certainly be inaugurated. Freedom of thought will bring about a clear and convincing outlook upon life and that in its turn will initiate a series of vital activities. What we do is the outcome of what we think and when what we think and believe is being shaken to its foundations by various challenges thrown out with different degrees of emphasis, there can no longer be stagnation.

II

Speaking at the Bangalore Christian Conference on the Union movement, Mr. Chenchiah is reported to have said that what they required to-day was not a massive form of organizations but live signs like the *Ashrams,* which could suffuse the general atmosphere with the spirit of Christ and which would operate on the whole land.[1] From this remark it is clear that a leading Indian Christian like Mr. Chenchiah regards the present Scheme as too elaborate for the growth of the spiritual life and that what is urgently needed is the development of *Ashrams*. It is necessary to consider this criticism in some detail. On one point, I think, general assent may be assumed from all Christians. It is this. The Roman Catholic Church, whatever its faults

[1] *The Hindu*, May 29, 1930.

may be, has been through the ages a perennial source of spiritual life. There has been all along in the Roman Church a steady stream of whole-hearted devotion and rich spirituality. Even to-day there is in her a large amount of humble and fervent piety which cannot but stir the heart of every true Christian. This is in spite of the fact that the Roman Church has a most massive form of organization which covers the world with its minute network of discipline and regulation. The fact that the Roman Church has insisted on a highly elaborate organization has not stood in the way of a deeply spiritual life developing within her bounds. She has been the mother of many saints, devotees and *bhaktas*. Within her bosom there have sprung into life noteworthy forms of Christian piety and life. Catching the flame of enthusiasm from her altars, the Christians of the Roman Church have gone forth all over the world ready to sacrifice and suffer, whether in education or in philanthropy. They have been the pioneers of new experiments and their enthusiasm has translated itself into millions of noble deeds. Her ascetics have been remarkable for their devotion and suffering. Her mystics have felt the rapture of union with the Divine and have recorded their experience in glowing words. Her teachers have spread over all countries carrying light and learning wherever they have gone. Her daughters have established thousands of nunneries where they have endeavoured to practise the spirit of the Master. While it is perfectly true that there is a great deal of formalism in the Roman Church, that she has gagged freedom of thought, and that the level of her spiritual life has sunk extraordinarily low at times, it must be acknowledged that there has been within the bounds of the Roman Church real spiritual life.

This fact apart, it must be pointed out that the idea that spiritual life in India can only be cultivated and spread through *Ashrams* has many difficulties. In ancient India, as we read in the sacred books, *Ashrams* were mainly homes of *rishis* or seers who lived away from the haunts of men in the depths of a forest and spent their time in meditation and prayer. They were often married men and they sometimes had pupils with them. But *Ashrams* were really homes of saintly men who lived more or less isolated lives in quest of God. The word *Ashram* is now beginning to be used in the Indian Church in a different sense. Two remarkable *Ashrams* have come into existence, one at Tiruppattur and one at Poona. Both these *Ashrams* are really monastic houses where the whole life is based upon celibacy. All honour to the devoted band of men and women who are working at these *Ashrams* and the inspiration of whose example is spreading through the Indian Church. In a wonderful way of service and sacrifice which was in Christ Jesus and their example has set many a heart glowing with gratitude and love. But it looks as if the movement is not going

to spread in any very large way. The life at these two *Ashrams* is mainly of a monastic character and Protestant Christians are not willing to accept the efficacy and the usefulness of the monastic ideal because they think the history of the Christian Church has demonstrated the general futility and impossibility of the celibate ideal. In a recent Roman Catholic book it is significant that the great value for succeeding generations of St. Francis is considered to have been mediated not by the mendicant orders but by the third order of lay people. Speaking of St. Francis Father Ferroli says, 'It was this Saint, the Mystic Contemplative of Mount Alvernia, who, together with Cardinal Ugolino, inflamed his followers with a burning love for 'Lady Poverty,' and formed the Third Order, which counts even now some three million members, and which has sheltered within its broad aisles some of the greatest men in history. . . . . The First and Second Orders of St. Francis have been compared to two mighty rivers which, flowing down from the snow-capped mountains, bring wealth to the plains among which their course lies. But one ventures to suggest that their fertilizing waters could not have reached so far, nor could have penetrated so deep into the Christian soil, had it not been for the Third Order, which, like a well-planned net of irrigation canals, has carried the waters of grace to the remotest corners of Christ's Vineyard.' [1]

Again, the value of an *Ashram* depends very largely upon the fact that a few select people who have a calling for life of this kind come together. We do not know whether it is meant that a great many *Ashrams* should spring up and that these should generate and supply spiritual power to the Churches or whether there should be no organized Church life but that men should come together and live lives of prayer and service in *Ashrams*. While we want to have many *Ashrams* and shall always be helped by devoted men of God who set themselves apart for work in them, it is to be seriously questioned as to whether *Ashrams* can displace Churches. Churches have sprung up to carry out on a large scale the very ideals of worship and service which the *Ashrams* embody on a small scale. A Church in a particular locality brings together year in and year out all Christians in that locality and seeks to infuse into them a spirit of devotion and life. It endeavours to touch every Christian and to touch him at every point. It baptizes him when he is born, confirms him, marries him and buries him. Every Sunday and sometimes in the course of the week it invites him to participate in prayer. The very fact that the Christian Church seeks to touch and help multitudes leads to organization and methods and rules. If the Christian Church should be content to deal with a few, she might be able to select only the gifted souls and her whole spiritual life might be on a higher plane. But it is because she is not

[1] *Studies in Christian Sanctity*, p. 249-250.

content to nourish a highly spiritual life only for the few but spreads herself out to touch an enormous number of souls that she has to avail herself of the services of men who are not sometimes deeply spiritual. It must be acknowledged that an effort must be made to help every man. It must be acknowledged further that this effort will involve a large bands of workers. In such a large band of workers it very often happens that many are not up to the mark. On this account the spiritual life of the Church suffers. Shall we for this reason exercise a selective process and seek to influence only a few? Our ideal and prayer must be rather that this large band of workers may be helped to enter into the riches which are hidden in Christ.

The popular idea that the Christian Church has been a failure and that sources of spiritual inspiration must be looked for in other directions is altogether mischievous. The Christian Church may have failed and there may be a great many things which we may say in criticism of her work in the past as well as at present. But this does not justify our supposing that from some unknown quarter spiritual help will come. It will not do to believe that somehow things will right themselves if the Christian Church is left out and new forms of religious life are discovered. Our duty, on the other hand, must be to pray that new life may be infused into the Christian Church and that she may seek worthily to follow in the footsteps of her Master. Whatever her faults may be, the Church has been all through the ages the one great source of light and strength to the followers of Christ and many new movements which are meant for greater spiritual life have risen from her or, at least, have been encouraged by her. It does not help us very much to suppose that spiritual help cannot come from the Churches but can only come from some unknown quarter.

III

Students of the religious history of India will easily concede that in a striking way South India has been the home of the Indian *bhakti* movement. The origin of the *Bhagavad Gita* is lost in obscurity and it is impossible to say anything definite about the place of its writing. But it is clear that there was a group of fervent devotees in South India who gave expression in beautiful Tamil hymns to their ecstatic adoration of God.[1] They were fervent *bhaktas,* that is, they were filled with love and devotion to God. Some of them adored Siva and their hymns are sung even to-day by innumerable followers of Siva. Others worshipped Vishnu and their hymns, again, are held in great esteem by the followers of Vishnu to-day. These *bhaktas* of old were great lovers of God and had an unquenchable yearning for union with

[1] For some examples of their poetry, see my *Temple Bells,* Association Press, Calcutta.

Him. Their desire for fellowship with God was the supreme passion of their lives. It controlled all their thinking. In words of immortal beauty they have placed on record their longing to reach and experience the bliss of communion with God. The extraordinary adventures of the soul in quest of this highest bliss have been preserved for us in hymns which are a part of the classical literature of India. The date of these various *bhaktas* has been fixed as being between the 6th and 9th centuries, A.D. The *Bhagavata Purana* is a great document of *bhakti* in India. Its influence has been widespread all over the country and there are several sects which treasure it as the scripture which sets forth in authoritative terms the doctrine of *bhakti* which they follow. As the result of his careful investigation Dr. Farquhar comes to the conclusion that the *Bhagavata Purana* was probably composed in South India about the 9th century A.D. A great *bhakti* thinker who has moulded religious experience and thought all over India comes also from South India. I refer to Ramanuja. He did his significant work in the twelfth century. It was he who gathered together various strands of *bhakti* experience and constructed them into a living unity. He was a devotee as well as a philosopher and in him the earlier elements of *bhakti* aspiration found a worthy system-builder. He sought to base his whole religious philosophy upon the soul's eagerness to hold fellowship with a personally conceived God. The influence of his philosophy upon later theistic systems of thought in India has been tremendous. Two facts are evident from this brief survey of the course of *bhakti* thought in India:

(1) *Bhakti* experience flourished in South India long before it flourished in other parts of India.

(2) We have clear reason to believe that from South India it spread and influenced other parts of India.

This makes us look forward with a new hope to the future. For various reasons the movement for Church Union has gathered strength in South India and it may be pardonable to believe that the movement springing from such a country with all its ancient associations will be a veritable spiritual force. It may well be that the unity which comes into existence as a result of the various negotiations going on at present will enable the Indian Church to progress rapidly in her spiritual development and to spread far and wide her participation in the rich spiritual life which is open to us in Christ Jesus.

A. J. APPASAMY

Shall we Unite?

By Rev. W. PATON, M.A.

The Editor invites me to write for the first number of this new bulletin, and I have the greatest pleasure in responding to his request. There are few causes in the whole world that one argues for with such a sense of urgency as for the cause of Christian union. Perhaps this brief article may be concerned with three of the main reasons why one believes so keenly in the ideal of a united Church.

In the first place let me put one argument, which though it is by no means the most important is one which I am perhaps as well qualified to urge as anyone who is likely to write for this bulletin. I refer to the argument from efficiency. We are sometimes told by those who are sceptical of the ideal of a united church that it is enough to seek for a unity of outlook and spirit. Should such unity be present, we are told, nothing more ought to be required, and the attempt at any kind of organic unity goes beyond that spiritual unity for which our Lord prayed. I think I may claim to be qualified to deal with this point, for I spent five years as secretary of the National Christian Council of India, and am now spending my whole energies as secretary of the International Missionary Council. There has grown up, as we all know, during the twenty years since the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910, a great movement for missionary co-operation. In India, as in other countries, the different missionary bodies and the representatives of the indigenous Church in its various branches meet together in provincial councils and in an all-India body, to consider their common problems. These councils, rightly and necessarily, do not claim any legislative power; they are simply and solely a means whereby separated bodies can, through common thought and prayer, achieve a common policy. I yield to no one in my belief in this method, and I think it could be proved by demonstration that it has justified itself.

Nevertheless, no one knows so well as those who have worked hard to perfect this method—the method of co-operation between separated bodies—how great is the necessary cumbersomeness of it, how slow the progress, how great the expenditure of energy in overcoming the inertia due simply to the fact of division. It is not merely that division tends to create vested interests, and that separated bodies very rapidly develop a sense each of its own peculiar and divine commission in the world. The fact to which I call attention is that even where there is the maximum desire for common action, and conviction of common policy, there is an immense difference between representatives of thirty separate organisations meeting together to consider a common policy

and a united Christian church in a given area settling that policy in the power of its united life.

While therefore I recognise that the proposed South Indian union does not cover all Christian bodies, and still leaves a great need for the promotion of co-operation, I welcome it as a great and substantial step towards the truer efficiency of the Christian church in India.

The second point which to me is of compelling importance is the necessary antagonism between denominationalism and the national spirit. I do not forget that there are dangers in the spirit of nationalism, or that in a certain final sense Christianity and nationalism are opposed. The ultimate value of the individual man in the Christian view is based upon God's estimate of him as shown in the death of Christ for men. The supreme value of an Indian or an Englishman is not that he is an Indian or an Englishman, but that he is one of those for whom the Lord Jesus Christ was content to die. Correspondingly, the Church in its essence is a supra-national society. To all this we can hold, but we can do so and yet recognize the validity of the plea that within a given people or race the Church of Christ should have a national colour, type or spirit. The Revelation speaks of bringing the glory and honour of the nations into the Kingdom. There is no anti-Christian nationalism in the view which wants to see Indian Christianity truly Indian, expressing the life that is in Christ in Indian words, Indian dress, Indian methods and through Indian traditions. All this is familiar to us. Is it however recognized as clearly as it ought to be that the existence of denominational barriers is an almost fatal obstacle to the achievement of this ideal? It is not merely the fact of division that makes the barrier, but the fact that the divisions are in each case the reflection of events in the Christian history of the west. It has again and again been urged by Indian Christians who have the right to speak, that while they do not question the importance of the denominational divisions of the West for those who were led to make them, they maintain that they are in the main irrelevant to India. I can see no hope of a Church being truly national in India so long as the labels, Baptist, Wesleyan, Anglican, etc., subsist.

The third point is the importance of the principle of comprehensiveness in dealing with the problem of Christian reunion. There are two types of objection often made to schemes such as that now before the South Indian churches. On the one hand there are those who urge that uniformity is a danger, and regard any scheme of organic unity as committing them to too great a degree of uniformity; on the other hand, there are those who say that the differences between Anglican and 'Free Church', above all between Catholic and Protestant, are so deep and real that it is impossible to arrive at a union between them which is not ultimately a sham. Starting from two different

points of view these objections are both fatal to any far-reaching scheme. They do however serve to draw our attention to the principle above referred to, the principle of comprehensiveness, and it is of vital importance for the unity movement. I believe that the protests against excessive uniformity are largely needless. I know of no unity scheme anywhere in the world which does not make generous room for difference of practice in regard to matters as vital as worship, the manner of the administration of the sacraments, and the organization of church life. While the failure of the South India union proposals to provide for identical action in all matters is regarded in certain quarters as a reason for condemnation, to a much larger number it appears to be one of the strongest reasons for approving it. The attempt has been made to arrive at union on enough main issues for union to be real, but to allow diversity on other things, and to leave it to the united Church to arrive at a greater measure of identity of practice, if it should desire to do so, within the fellowship of union.

What lies behind this however is an implied philosophy which is repudiated by some. It is the view that a synthesis is possible between those who accept the name Protestant and those who, with whatever qualification, prefer to call themselves Catholic. No view of the South India proposals does them justice, or is adequately realistic, which does not face this fact. It is doubtless the case that the number of members of the Anglican communion in South India who would call themselves 'Anglo-Catholic' is in the minority. The fact remains that the scheme is an endeavour to achieve a unity between those (a majority as it happens), who call themselves Protestant and to whom spiritual nature has traditionally been along the line of the prayer-meeting, of preaching, of Bible reading, with sacraments austerely celebrated, and others, a minority it may be, to whom the words 'Eucharist', 'Real Presence', 'sacramental absolution,' convey the richest associations of the spiritual life.

There are many good Christian men who gravely doubt whether Christian union can ever overleap this historic chasm. It may be that they are right, and that those who are essaying this leap are rash optimists. Nevertheless, it must be faced that if this chasm cannot be passed then it is vain babble for us to talk about the union of Christendom.

It is certainly true that union with the bulk of Catholic Christianity as it stands, is impossible for Protestantism—impossible by the act of Rome herself, and impossible so long as she remains in some vital respects unreformed. Yet those who are not forgetful of the saints who have lived between St. Paul and William Carey, who find intellectual and spiritual nourishment in Von Hügel as well as in James Denney, and who recognize how in the last resort the purest Catholic-

ism and the most convinced Protestantism alike depend upon the 'givenness' of the Grace of God, will not easily be convinced that it is wrong or foolish to endeavour after and defend a union where these two great worshipping types shall join hand in hand.

A Manifesto on Church Union

The divisions of Christendom have been a great stumbling block to many. They have stood in the way of the effective spread of the Gospel. In the providence of God, South India has been called to lead in the matter of Church Union. Already some earnest men have spent considerable time and toil in thinking over the problem and we pray and hope that as the result of this toil a definite step forward will be taken.

Even as early as 1892, Kali Charan Banurji of Calcutta urged in the Decennial Missionary Conference, Bombay, that immediate steps should be taken for Church Union. There was considerable opposition from Missionaries at the Conference and his attempt fell through.

This urge for Union has become deeper and stronger with time as all over India in all the fields of life there is a marked longing to compose differences, such as those between different communities. It is felt by all that the attainment of unity is fundamental for India's progress. This desire vigorously expresses itself in the Indian Church as a movement for Church Union. It may also be said that the desire for Union is in keeping with the spirit of tolerance of different forms of belief that has been characteristic of the people of India. Further, Christians in India are free from those memories of historical struggles which the Christians of the West have inherited from their past.

The theological dogmas accepted by Western Churches have not dominated the Indian mind as they have not been indigenous, and the attitude of the Indian Christian has been one of indifference towards them. The existence of denominations tends to retard the growth of Christian experience and limit the scope of its expression in those ways of thought and life which are most normal to the people. The Indian has always stressed 'Bhakti' and feels that through faith in God his highest feelings can best be expressed rather than through dogma. A United Church, free from the bonds of the present separated denominations, will provide a congenial atmosphere for the Indian expression of Christianity.

We have further to remember that the United Church of South India must form an integral part of the Universal Church and whatever is of abiding value in her must be conserved here.

In the absence of any other Scheme and in view of the fact that the present Scheme provides ample room for the development and also the possibility of Union with other Churches, we urge our fellow-Christians in South India to accept the present Scheme as early as possible for further negotiation. The present Scheme, whether perfect or not, certainly affords a working basis and such changes as are felt to be absolutely necessary can be introduced.

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Mr. Samuel Muthaiya, B.A., L.T., Head Master, Sivakasi, Ramnad.
Mr. A. Chelliah, B.A., Teacher, Palamcottah.
Mr. J. S. Pushpanathan, Clerk, Trichinopoly.
Mr. J. J. David, Clerk, Kolar Gold Field.
Mr. S. Jesudason, B.E., A.M.I.E., Municipal Engineer, Trichinopoly.
Mr. S. Joseph, B.A., L.T., Teacher, Tanjore.

Mr. D. Anbudaian, B.A., Retired Thasildar, Madura.
Mrs. C. Joseph, Supervisor of S.P.G. Schools, Tanjore.
Mr. M. S. Appadurai, B.A., Clerk, South Indian Railway, Tanjore.
Mr. J. F. Thomas, B.A., Clerk, Collectorate, Tanjore.
Dr. D. Kerubamoni, L.M.P., Medical Practitioner, Tanjore.
Mr. B. Abraham, B.A., Retired Customs Inspector, Tanjore.
Mr. Samuel Joseph, Retired Post Master, Tanjore.
Mr. Sam R. Moses, B.A., English Head Accountant, Tanjore.
Mr. G. Joseph, Teacher, Tanjore.
Mr. C. G. Ratnasigamoni Nadar, Sub-Magistrate, Tanjore.
Mr. J. D. Gnanabaranam, Sub-Inspector, Tanjore.
Mr. V. A. Koilpillai, B.A., Clerk, Collectorate, Tanjore.
Mr. D. S. Appavoo, B.A., B.L., District Court Pleader, Thuckalai, S. Travancore.
Mr. S. K. Yesudhason, Pleader, Thuckalai, S. Travancore.
Mr. F. Chatterton, Pleader, Thuckalai, S. Travancore.
Mr. G. Mutthiah, Pleader, Thuckalai, S. Travancore.
Mr. J. B. David, Overseer, Tanjore.
Mr. M. S. Appadurai, Railway Auditor, Tanjore.
Mr. D. Gnanaseromani Nadar, Retired Thasildar, Trichinopoly.
Dr. G. D. Gnanamuthu, L.M. & S., Civil Assistant Surgeon, Tirukoilur, S. Arcot.
Mr. R. S. Michael, B.A., L.T., Lecturer, Christian College, Madras.
Mr. P. M. Doraiswamy, B.A., L.T., Deputy Inspector of Schools, Erode.
Mr. K. Ambrose Ananda, B.A., L.T., London Mission High School, Bangalore.
Mr. F. B. Selvanayagam, B.A., Retired Deputy Superintendent of Police, Hony. First Class Magistrate, Coimbatore.
Mr. R. Eapen, B.A., B.L., Advocate, Coimbatore.
Dr. P. K. Kurien, L.M. & S., Assistant Surgeon, Coimbatore.
Mr. D. Santhapillai, B.A., Tahsildar, Coimbatore.
Mr. S. David, Metur Project, Coimbatore.
Mr. G. Thomas, Clerk, Metur Project, Coimbatore.
Dr. S. Samuel, Bhavani, Coimbatore.
Mr. S. V. Noah, Teacher, Erode.
Mr. D. Solomon, Sub-Registrar, Erode.
Mr. Y. Dorai Raj, Guard, Podanur.
Mr. D. F. Tucker, B.A., L.T., Asst., District Board High School, Tiruvatur (Tanjore Dist.).
Mr. A. Paul, B.A., L.T., Asst., St. Peter's High School, Tanjore.
Mr. A. M. Devasahayam, Superintendent, The Blake Hostel, Tanjore.
Dr. C. J. Titus, L.M. & S., Asst. Surgeon, Quilon, Travancore.
Mr. S. C. Chatterjee, M.A., Principal, Christ Church College, Cawnpore.
Mr. Edward Jesudian, B.A., Retired Deputy Collector, and Manager, District Board, Salem.
Dr. Henry S. Hensman, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., M.P.S., Superintendent, Mental Hospital, Madras.
Mrs. Mona Hensman, M.A., Madras.
Lt.-Colonel R. K. Mitter, I.M.S., (Retired), Dehra Dun.
Mr. A. Jesudasen, B.A., First Grade Pleader, Trichinopoly.
Mr. J. Jesudasen, M.A., Rural Secretary, Y.M.C.A., South Travancore.
Mr. M. Edward Samuel, B.A., L.T., Pasumalai.
Mr. R. N. Philips, B.A., Pasumalai.
Mr. G. Joseph, Pasumalai.
Rev. Paul Raj Thomas, B.A., B.D., Pastor, Pasumalai.
Mr. D. Stephen, B.A., L.T., Teacher, Pasumalai.
Rev. J. S. Masillamony, B.D., Lecturer, Union Theological Seminary, Pasumalai.
Mr. S. Bernad, B.A., L.T., Pasumalai Training School.
Mr. B. Balavendram, L.M.P., Pasumalai.
Mr. R. Michael, B.A., Headmaster, Training School, Pasumalai.
Mr. Maite, M.A., Headmaster, S.P.G. School, Ranchi.
Mr. J. M. Laha, Incharge of Government Press, Ranchi.
Mr. D. P. Singh, Deputy Magistrate, Ranchi.
Mr. D. S. Masillamani, B.A., L.T., Headmaster, Capron Hall High School, Madura.
Miss D. Abraham, B.A., L.T., Capron Hall, Madura.
Mr. Peter Isaac, B.A., L.T., Vice-Principal, American College (Retired), Vice-Chairman, Madura District Church Council and Municipal Councillor, Madura.
Mr. N. Soundara Raj Peter, B.A., B.L., Advocate, Madura.
Mr. John A. David, Barrister at law, Advocate, High Court.
Mr. G. S. Abraham, B.A., Headmaster, U.C. High School, Madura.
Mr. Isaac Samuel, B.A., Huzur Sheristadar, Madura Collectorate.
Mr. Thambu Asirvatham, B.A., Clerk, Collectorate, Madura.
Mr. S. Gnanaolivu, B.A., B.L., Advocate and Additional Public Prosecutor, Madura.
Rev. Thangam Gabriol, West Gate, Madura.
Mr. G. Chinniah, Madura Mission Head Clerk, Madura.

Palamcottah Conference on Church Union

April 9-11, 1930

(By Rev. J. A. JACOB, M A., B.D.)

The urge for Church Union becomes deeper and stronger, and Indian Christians belonging to different denominations have been meeting in group conferences to discuss the problem. An important conference of this kind was held in Palamcottah from April 9th to 11th, when about 25 Indian Christians from S. Travancore, about 25 from Tinnevelly and about 15 from Madura met and discussed the problem of Church Union in general and the '*Proposed Scheme of Union*' in particular. A few missionaries also were present. It is significant to note that this was the first occasion when representatives from the S. Travancore Church and the Tinnevelly Church came together and discussed a problem common to both. As was observed by several speakers, if such conferences had been arranged in the past, greater success would have attended the Union movement.

On Wednesday April 9, the Divine service was conducted by Rev. J. H. Legg, M.A., of Trivandrum in the Tinnevelly Church, and he emphasised in his sermon the place of personal experience in religion. In the morning session of the conference, the bishop of Tinnevelly and Rev. A. T. Foster of Travancore spoke on '*The General conditions and Nature of the proposed Union*'. The bishop said that the union we pray for should be '*God-centred*' and that we are not trying to found a new church but 'to express locally the principle of the great catholic unity of the Body of Christ.' Rev. A. T. Foster emphasised the fact that while the united Church would be autonomous, free from any foreign control, the relationship between the younger and the older churches, was intimate and real and that the spiritual kinship would be maintained after the consummation of Union. In the discussion which followed, it was observed by several that we accept episcopacy as the form of government of the United Church not because we believe it as the only form of *valid* church government, but because it is the only basis of union between the Anglican Church, the Wesleyan Church and the South India United Church. In the afternoon session, Rev. Stephen Neil, M.A., and Rev. D. Koilpillai, B.A., of Nazareth opened the discussion on '*The meaning and implication of an acceptance of Episcopacy: the question of Apostolic Succession, exceptions to a rule of episcopal ordination.*' The discussion centred on 'The Apostolic Succession.' It was the general feeling that this doctrine should not be emphasised in the Scheme of Union and should be left as an open question. After the afternoon session was over, there was a public meeting in the Centenary Hall when Mr. J. Jesu-

dason, M.A., of S. Travancore gave an address on '*The hidden wealth in our villages*' Mr. D. Rajendram, B.A., B.L., of Palamcottah presided. At 9 P.M., the devotional address was given by Rev. C. W. F. Bennett, M.A., of St. John's College, Palamcottah.

On Thursday April 10, the Bishop conducted the Divine service and celebrated the Holy Communion to which all the delegates of the S.I.U.C. were invited. This invitation was gladly accepted by the delegates who rejoiced to partake of the communion even before the Union is consummated. The intercommunion that morning in the Church was fitting introduction to the subject of the morning session '*Freedom of Intercommunion and intercelebration in the United Church*' Rev. M. S. Taylor, B.D., of Madura and Mr. K. Paul, B.A., B.L., of S. Travancore who spoke on this subject maintained that these should precede the consummation of union among the three churches. Those who took part in the discussion spoke of the incalculable spiritual value of intercommunion and intercelebration, and maintained that the Union we pray for will more speedily come if these become more common. In the afternoon, Mr. Paul Daniel, M.A., Secretary of the Travancore Church Council spoke on '*The Powers of individual Congregations*'. He pointed out that the principles that have been found helpful in Congregationalism have all been concerned in the Scheme of Union. Mr. D. K. Arthur, B.A., B.D., of Tuticorin spoke next on '*Confirmation and Admission to full Membership*'. A public meeting was held that evening in the Centenary Hall when Mr. D. R. Vethamuthu, M.A., agent of the Imperial Bank at Palamcottah read a paper on '*The Lay Ministry*'. From his experience as a 'Local Preacher' in the Wesleyan Mission in Madras and in Palamcottah, he offered many practical suggestion how the service of the laymen could be secured for 'spreading the good news of the Kingdom of God and the message of Salvation through Jesus Christ.' Mr. Daniel Thomas B.A., M.L.C., who presided over the meeting emphasised the place of service in Christian life. The devotional meeting was conducted at 9 P.M. by Rev. D. S. David, Circle Chairman, Tinnevelly.

Friday's session began by a divine service conducted by Rev. N. H. Harris of Travancore and Rev. M. S. Taylor of Madura in the Church. During the Morning session, the subjects '*The use of Creeds,*' and '*Church discipline*' were discussed. Rev. G. T. Selwyn, M.A., of Palamcottah and Rev. J. A. Jacob, M.A., B.D., of Bangalore, introduced the subjects. The Bishop who presided at this meeting was requested to explain the constitution of the Tinnevelly diocese and, his various functions, and powers as a bishop. The delegates were very pleased to hear from the bishop how he is only the chief Pastor and the executive officer and not an autocratic ruler as many had supposed.

At the closing session, Mr. Paul Daniel expressed on behalf of the delegates thanks to the Indian Christians of Tinnevelly and especially Revs. G. T. Simeon and Devadason who spared no pains to make the Conference a success. He also extended an invitation to the Tinnevelly Christians for a similar conference in Travancore next year.

Action of the Church of Scotland General Assembly

With Reference to the South India Union Scheme

RESOLUTION X

The General Assembly receive with great interest the report on the Proposed Scheme of Union for Churches in South India. While regarding with sympathy every well-conceived effort to promote the unity of the Christian Church, the Assembly recognise that the time has not yet come for any considered judgment by the Church of Scotland on the merits of this particular Scheme. In view, however, of the importance and complexity of the Scheme, and the wide issues involved, the Assembly cordially adopt the recommendation contained in the Report, and in accordance therewith remit the matter to a special Committee consisting of 12 representatives of the Foreign Mission Committee, 12 representatives of the Committee on Relations with Other Churches, and 12 members appointed *ad hoc* by the General Assembly, with instructions to watch over the progress of the negotiations, to give such guidance to the Madras Mission Council as they may find possible, and to report further to next General Assembly.

The South India Reunion Scheme

(*From the Modern Churchman*)

Many are the letters, pamphlets, and pronouncements which the South India Reunion Scheme has called forth. They equal in quantity, if not in quality, the harvest of Kikuyu declarations. They are mainly intended to influence the judgment of the Lambeth Conference. It is more than doubtful whether they will influence judgment in South India, where practical needs rather than ecclesiastical theories constitute the centripetal forces.

Besides the utterances of Bishop Gore, Bishop Palmer, and Bishop Headlam, we have the illuminating contributions of Archdeacon Hunkin and Canon N. P. Williams, and the judicious considerations propounded by Canon Goudge and Archdeacon Rawlinson. A contribution, signed by a number of Modernist and Liberal Evangelical Churchmen, deserves a place in our pages, as it summarizes concisely and correctly, so it seems to us, the ancient historic background against which the South India proposals should be seen. We venture therefore to publish it here in full with its signatures. It is entitled *The Ministry in the Early Church—an Argument from History.*

SIR,

No greater or more urgent question has come before our day and generation than that of Christian Unity: and with the question, by the providence of God, there comes a greater opportunity of solution than has hitherto occurred, or is likely to occur again, if neglected.

Nothing, we believe, would be in itself more according to the will of God, or more likely to convince mankind of the relevance of Christianity to the great contemporary world issues than a courageous and sustained movement towards the reuniting of Christendom. Indications of increased desire for mutual understanding have multiplied among established communions, and reintegration has already taken place on a large scale in Canada and Australia,

in English Methodism, and in the Church of Scotland. Urgent demand is now being made by young communities in different parts of the mission field, particularly in Persia, India, and China, for the removal of the scandal of a divided witness in non-Christian lands. It is from the mission field that matters are being brought to an issue for the Anglican Church. The South India Church Union Scheme, which seeks to translate into action the Appeal for Unity made by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, will be before the bishops of the whole Anglican Communion in the Lambeth Conference of 1930. They will then have to decide upon a line of policy which in its ultimate issue may largely determine the future of Christendom.

The present situation appears to us sufficiently to resemble that in which the Church found itself in the first and second centuries as to arouse the hope that the actual process by which fusion then took place may be repeated in our own day. This is good reason for studying afresh in the light of recent research the development of the ministry in the early Church, because some of the greatest practical difficulties of the present time are those which concern the ministry.

The fact of an actual succession in ministry from Apostolic times cannot now be fairly disputed. But this succession, where it existed, was a succession of presbyter-bishops (*Acts* xx, 17, 28), not of monarchical bishops. It was not until well into the second century that a ministry of succession, receiving its authority through the ordering of a monarchical episcopate, by natural expansion or express adoption, became nearly universal in the Church. This expansion and final adoption was promoted and demanded by the special circumstances of the time—the growth of heresy and the stress of persecution.

The later theory of Apostolic Succession had its root in the belief that its purpose was to secure and transmit sacramental grace. It is quite clear, however, that the primary purpose of the ministry was to maintain order and discipline, and to secure continuance of the preaching of the Word—the teaching of Jesus and concerning Jesus. An official ministry responsible for its own succession was, and is, in a stronger position to do these things than a ministry popularly appointed. It is equally clear that this original function was considered of chief importance till late in the second century, appeal to the fact of episcopal successions being cited as a witness, not to the transmission of grace, but to continuous teaching of the same doctrine of Christ. Important as the sacraments of the Gospel were in the life of the primitive Church, the normal restriction of administration to the minister was originally a matter of seemliness and Church order. Baptism has never yet been completely restricted to the clergy, and the possibility of lay administration of the Eucharist was not ruled out even at the close of the second century.

The claim that a particular pattern of ministry was necessary to the gift of God's grace in the sacraments was formulated later and defined to safeguard the official ministry of the Church, just as a dogma of verbal inspiration was propounded to safeguard the canonical Scriptures. These dogmas, perhaps natural under earlier conditions of thought and life, cannot to-day be maintained, and in particular it is impossible as it is impious to deny reality to the sacraments of non-episcopal ministries.

In view of these considerations we feel bound to urge that there is no true ground of objection to be raised on these issues to the ministerial union of the Anglican with Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist communions on the basis of the common acceptance of the ancient threefold ministry; and that there should be no real ground of offence to Christian consciences in such provision for interim periods before all ministries have come to be episcopally ordained as is intended in the South India Church Union Scheme. The widespread present readiness at home and abroad to make episcopacy a rallying point of union (so long as it is unencumbered with traditionalist dogmatism) gives to the Anglican Communion a special opportunity and responsibility. The Anglican view of orders since the Reformation has not been bound in theory or in practice to such an idea of validity as denies to those not episcopally ordained a true ministry of Word and Sacrament.

The Church of England, with its ancient episcopate on the one hand, and on the other its recognition of the moral and spiritual validity of the varied ministries of the Reformed Churches, is therefore in a position to contribute invaluable help to the wide movement towards unity, and it is our sincere hope that the effort now being made to form a united Church in South India on an episcopal basis will not fail to secure whole-hearted support where it has the best right to look for it.

We are, Sir, Your obedient servants,

ARTHUR F. ALSTON, JOHN N. BARRAN, A. BAINS, F. R. BARRY, J. F. BETHUNE BAKER, R. BLAKENEY, H. E. D. BLAIKISTON, R. BROOK, V. J. K. BROOK, F. C. BURKITT, R. J. CAMPBELL, A. J. CARLYLE, R. H. CHARLES, G. A. CHASE, GILBERT COLERIDGE, H. COSTLEY-WHITE, G. G. COULTON, W. L. PAIGE COX, J. M. CREED, R. S. CRIPPS, H. P. CRONSHAW, D. DAWSON-WALKER, PERCY DEARMER, W. MOORE EDE, P. GARDNER-SMITH, J. P. GORDON, J. BATTERSBY HARFORD, P. J. HEAWOOD, A. D. HENWOOD, F. B. HEISER, H. ST. B. HOLLAND, R. T. HOWARD, G. J. HOWSON, G. F. IRWIN, HEWLETT JOHNSON, W. GUY JOHNSON, R. B. JOLLY, R. H. KENNETT, J. B. LANCELOT, HENRY M. LAWSON, A. B. G. LILLINGSTON, W. W. LONGFORD, A. O.

LUKYN-WILLIAMS, G. C. L. LUNT, PAT MCCORMICK, A. J. M. MACDONALD, W. H. MACKEAN, H. D. A. MAJOR, C. H. S. MATTHEWS, W. R. MATTHEWS, R. A. MITCHELL, W. D. MORRISON, W. E. R. MORROW, CYRIL NORWOOD, M. W. PATTERSON, C. E. RAVEN, J. H. RICHARDS, M. R. RIDLEY, T. GUY ROGERS, C. F. RUSSELL, T. R. SALE, G. F. SAYWELL, W. MARSHALL SELWYN.

ALBERT C. SEWARD, L. G. M. SHELDON, D. C. SIMPSON, VERNON F. STORR, W. S. THATCHER, J. H. THORPE, G. C. TURNER, A. V. VALENTINE-RICHARDS, C. S. WALLIS, R. WATERFIELD, E. W. WATSON, C. C. J. WEBB, W. WELCHMAN, J. E. C. WELLDON, BP., J. L. WHITE, A. T. P. WILLIAMS, CECIL W. WILSON, E. S. WOODS, C. S. WOODWARD.

Findings of the Landour Conference on Church Union

(*From The Indian Witness*)

Note.—This Conference held at Landour on June 9, 10, and 13 was one of the most representative gatherings that it would be possible to assemble in northern India. The Missions and Churches represented by one or more visitors were, the United Church of Northern India, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the English Baptist Church, the American Disciples' Church, the English Disciples' Church, the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonite Church, and the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon.

It must not be understood that the Conference was anything other than informal, and unofficial, nor that the findings were in all respects unanimous. At the same time it is believed that the findings do represent a point of view that fairly reflects the common mind of the group as a whole, due consideration having been given, as far as possible, to minority points of view.

1. On the Spiritual Life

There was a common mind in the Conference that any real union of churches must rest upon a deepening and quickening of the Spiritual Life, which alone will enable them to transcend all differences in an attitude of mutual confidence and love.

2. On the Nature and Scope of Union

This Conference rejoices that a strong and growing desire for closer Unity among the churches has found wide expression in the general discussion. While there exists a difference of opinion as to the exact nature of the organisation which should be aimed at, and the steps to be taken to bring the churches into union, the general feeling is that Christ's ideal for His Church cannot be fully realised without *some* form of organic union. While endeavouring to transcend all unessential elements in the historic divisions which have kept them apart, yet it is understood that such union should seek to conserve all that is regarded as essential to spiritual life and freedom by any of the various uniting churches.

3. On Creeds and Confessions

While there was very little discussion on the subject of Creeds and Confessions, yet it was clear that our strongest bond of unity is to be found in our common loyalty to Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour; and there was general agreement that we should regard the Bible as the final authority in all matters of faith. There undoubtedly exists a difference of opinion as to the value of Creeds and Confessions, though it is generally recognized that they do have their value as symbols of union and as means of instruction.

4. On the Ministry

There was general agreement that the ministry in any organic union in northern India should be such as to receive the widest possible recognition outside the union; and it was also agreed that the uniting churches must of necessity mutually recognise the equal validity of their respective ministries. While it was commonly felt that the administrative office of a bishop was desirable, and that some form of general superintendency could usefully be adopted in the united church, yet there was a widespread feeling that, because of certain implications, it would be inadvisable to adopt the Historic Episcopacy as the *only* basis for securing the widest possible recognition of the ministry. Nevertheless, we pledge ourselves to keep an open mind on the subject of wider union which may include the Historic Episcopacy in a constitutional form.

Note.—The South India Scheme of Union includes the 'historic episcopate in a constitutional form . . . . without intending thereby to imply, or to express a judgment on, any theory concerning episcopacy.' At the same time this Conference is of the opinion that the 'historic episcopacy' does in fact involve certain implications, which, in particular, would make the mutual recognition of the equal validity of the ministries of the various uniting churches an impossibility.

5. On the Sacraments

While among the various groups represented it was indicated that there was a quite general mutual recognition of the celebration of the Sacraments, and that inter-communion, and the mutual exchange of membership were becoming increasingly common, even in the case of once rigidly exclusive groups, yet the Conference hopes that earnest and persevering efforts will be made towards the further removal of all such barriers, wherever they may be found.

6. On Relations with Other Churches

The Conference is of the opinion that in any union which may be achieved in northern In-

dia, it is of supreme importance that the uniting churches should continue to be in full communion and fellowship with all the churches both at Home and in India with which they formerly enjoyed such relations and privileges before the union took place.

7. On the Relation of Mission and Church

We desire that a real effort be made to make Missions Church-centric, with the ultimate aim of placing their resources of men and money under the control of the church of Christ in India. We also regard it as highly desirable that Mission Boards should endeavour in every way possible to impress their missionaries with the importance of identifying themselves with the Indian Church.

8. On the Proposed Scheme of Union in South India

This Conference desires to express its joy that the negotiating churches in South India have been able to prepare a Scheme of Union which is now before them for adoption. We rejoice that the cause of union is thus being advanced, and we earnestly hope and pray that further consideration of this Scheme will ultimately lead to a wider union of the churches of Christ in India.

At the same time it is the judgment of this Conference that this Scheme of Union, *as it now stands*, embodies certain limitations and implications (See *Note* under para. 4) which, we regret to say, render it an unsuitable instrument, at this stage of our thinking, for achieving union among the churches of northern India.

9. On Closer Relations Between Various Churches or Missions Preceding Union

The Conference believes that certain effective efforts at closer co-operation between like-minded churches or missions can and should be attempted preceding the achievement of actual union, and as an aid to it. It suggests that such like-minded churches or missions should proceed as soon as practicable to set up a Permanent Joint-Committee which should serve to further:

(*a*) The mutual recognition and use of the ministry and sacraments.
(*b*) Common objectives and endeavours in evangelistic work.
(*c*) Joint enterprises in education, theological training, medical and industrial work, and church periodicals.
(*d*) To continually explore the possibility and advisability of adopting closer forms of organic union.

Extracts from an address of the President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference at the annual meeting of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in May 1930

(*From the Methodist Recorder*)

Dr. Lofthouse said:

'For years our missionaries in South India have been considering, with the Anglicans and the South India United Church, a Scheme of Union for the three Churches. It is now before the world. Union, they tell us on the field, must come. It may be a luxury at home, it is a necessity abroad. Deny it, and you will perpetuate the anomaly by which members of the same family may be forbidden to meet at the Table of the Lord. India, like China, makes little of ecclesiastical differences, which to some of us also are of small account, beside the great task of preaching the universal and undistinguishing love of God. Whatever continues these differences dims the clear beauty of the grace of Christ, the general Saviour of mankind.'

'Now for the first time an attempt is being made to overcome the most formidable of these differences, the gulf which divides the Catholic and Evangelical conceptions of the Ministry and the Sacraments. If this attempt succeeds, we shall cease to speak of Anglicans or Wesleyans; we shall speak of Christians. We shall at last show to India a Christ, not of the West, but of all humanity. We shall doubtless regret the loss of the time-honoured names; we shall regret much else that our intimate denominational life has endeared to us. But while we lose these, we must guard what is far more sacred—the immediate access of Christ to the soul, and of the soul to Christ. The New Christian Church in India or elsewhere, if it comes, may have officials known as Bishops; but they must be overseers or shepherds, not rulers or arbiters or monarchs. They must stand for inclusiveness. They must not do what has so often been done by Episcopacy in the past, lord it over the heritage of the Church, and admit or expel from the fold. Unity, as our Lord's will, means far more than ecclesiastical union, but it surely means banishment of rivalry, bitterness and strife; it means that Christ will be proclaimed as to-day He cannot be. For myself, I pray God that neither by the Bishops assembled at Lambeth nor by our own Conference, discouragement should be caused to the generous and daring desire of our brethren in South India. They will welcome our denominational caution. Let us welcome their faith in a Church in which denominational scars are healed and forgotten. But whether union come in South India and elsewhere as we envisage it or not, the day will surely come when, free from the chains of error and superstition, of self-will and pride and fear and greed, the chains that bind men in every nation and in every land, we

shall march together into the light with one heart and one way, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, led by the Spirit of God to the presence of the Captain and Completer of our Faith, where the multitudes of the redeemed out of every nation and tribe and language stand around the Throne of God'

The South Indian Scheme

(Anglo-Catholic Manifesto, September, 1929)

A paper of comments on an earlier draft (Bangalore, June, 1928) of this Scheme, signed by most of the signatories of the following document, was presented in January, 1929, and published in English newspapers in April. It will be observed that we are now dealing with the Scheme in the final form prepared for presentation to the governing bodies concerned.

1. We wish first of all to express again our deep sympathy with Indian Christians in that, while Europeans have brought them the Gospel, they have brought it by no means as the message of the one Catholic Fellowship, but burdened and obscured by our longstanding divisions and controversies. It is altogether right that they should resent these divisions in which they find themselves involved and which do not much interest them, and that they should resent them more and more as there awakens among them the desire that the Indian Church should stand on its own basis, and not be forced to regard itself as dependent on foreign Churches. We therefore welcome whole-heartedly the efforts being made in South India to terminate some at least of our existing divisions by working out a scheme of reunion which all the uniting bodies can accept without what they regard as a sacrifice of principle. Further, in-as-much as the influences under which those Indian Christians whom we are now considering have been brought have been for the most part of a distinctively Protestant character, it is natural that their outlook should be of a like nature, and that they should take no account of the Roman Catholics of India who remain quite outside their purview. Even the Syrian Christians, who are their near neighbours, and form a very large group, are unfortunately not now included in the negotiations.

Home Interests

2. But it is obvious that the whole Anglican Communion must be interested in these negotiations, and is bound to examine them. What is proposed is a union of South Indian Christians, which would leave the united Church in full communion simultaneously with the Anglican body throughout the world and with a number of Protestant, non-episcopal bodies. The provision that 'none of the ministers or members of the united Church shall, because of the union, forego any rights with regard to intercommunion and intercelebration which they possessed before the union,' should also be noted. Thus we are directly concerned in the negotiations. The Anglican Communion is the home of Catholic-minded as well as of Protestant-minded people; and has, largely because this is the case, a special vocation to minister to the cause of general reunion. We are bound, therefore, to examine carefully any proposals for reunion in one direction to see if they contain anything which would render them impossible of acceptance by some considerable body of Anglicans, or anything which would render futile any efforts towards reunion in the other direction. If this is regarded as a drawback to the free development of the Anglican Communion—as it is—it is a drawback inherent in its professed comprehensiveness. It is, moreover, obvious that though the proposed Scheme of union is limited in its scope to a particular district—South India—it would, if approved, become a decisive precedent to be followed in many parts of the world.

3. While we are conscious that the Madras Committee has made some attempt to meet previous criticisms, and that some phrases in the Bangalore Report to which exception has been taken have disappeared from the Madras Report, yet the point of view evidently remains the same. There can, we fear, be no question, that certain features remain which Catholic-minded persons must view with grave anxiety, and some which may be found so inconsistent with their principles that they could not remain in communion with any Church which formally sanctioned them. We desire to call attention to some of the features in the proposed Scheme which in this respect have the most importance.

4. (*a*) The point of view expressed throughout the Report is that of the full recognition of the different ministries of the united Church. Thus we read: 'That all the other ministers (i.e. other than the bishops) of the uniting Churches in the area of the union shall be acknowledged as ministers of the Word and of the Sacraments in the united Church, each retaining the standing (whether as a minister authorized to celebrate the Holy Communion, or as a deacon or a probationer) which he had before union in his own Church.' And the bishops are to take responsibility for the different types of ministry and give authorization to the ministers. Now we gladly recognise that 'the fruit of the Spirit' and His activity have been abundantly apparent in non-episcopal communions and their ministries—not least among the Friends, who repudiate sacramental ordinances—and we welcome the principle that 'God is not tied to His Sacraments,' but can give His gifts as and where He will; we recognize also how often separations from the Church have been due in great measure to the Church's own fault. And we do not feel any desire to ask of anyone, minister or layman of a non-episcopal communion, any expression

of doubt as to the reality of the spiritual gifts which he believes himself to have received. But we must ask that they on their part should recognise that it has been the constant belief of Catholics that an episcopally ordained ministry which has descended in orderly succession from the Apostles is the only legitimate ministry of the Church, and that its recovery, where it has been lost, is the necessary condition of union.

Rewording Necessary

Such of us as hold this belief cannot conscientiously accept any form of settlement which implies that there is no essential difference between one ministry and another, as if that were agreed upon by both parties and were the basis of union. We therefore think it would be necessary, if due regard is to be shown to a conviction which the Anglican Church has always hitherto respected, that there should be such rewording of various clauses as should make it evident that our Church is not being asked to commit itself to the principle of the equal validity of all ministries.

(*b*) It appears to us also that the possibility of holding in the Church of England the belief that an episcopally ordained ministry would be definitely prejudiced if the Church of England were in full communion with a Church being, as is proposed, in full communion also with non-episcopal Churches. It should be made clear that, even in the proposed 'United Church,' so long as differently ordained ministries subsist side by side, union in the full sense would not have been attained. There would still be two different classes of ministers ministering side by side to different congregations; and they would obtain no fresh status in communions outside the area covered by the Scheme.

(*c*) When once the Union is formed, it is proposed that all henceforth who are to be ordained to the ministry of the Church are to be ordained by bishops. After a time, therefore, all will have been so ordained. But during an interval, reckoned at thirty years, a large number of those who are to be fully recognized as ministers of the Word and Sacraments will have received no episcopal ordination, and during that period at least it will be possible for them to be admitted to the pastoral charge of (hitherto) Anglican congregations if it should not appear that this arrangement 'would offend the conscientious convictions of any persons directly concerned.'* It will be remembered that the tradition among the Indian Christians of our communion would not in all cases have led them to resent such a suggestion. On the other hand, the General Council of the Church of England in India carefully excluded this very contingency. They asked for 'a proviso that no non-episcopally ordained minister shall either temporarily or permanently be placed in charge of a congregation accustomed to an episcopally ordained minister' (with a corresponding proviso on the other side). It is, then, in our judgment essential that the restriction contemplated by the General Council should be recognized unconditionally; if this is not done, the Anglican position would be compromised.

(*d*) We consider that the words 'intention and expectation' do not adequately express a definite agreement that eventually all the ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the united Church are to be episcopally ordained. This agreement should be unequivocally expressed as the basis of union, and not as an 'intention and expectation' only. Further, the clause concerning 'the ministers of any Church whose missions have founded the originally separate parts of the united Church' to the effect that 'after this period of thirty years, the united Church will consider and decide the question of such exceptions to the general principle of an episcopally ordained ministry,' seems to us inconsistent with such an agreement as to the future, and should be omitted.

What has enabled the Anglican Communion to hold together in the past is the rule that 'no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest or deacon in the Church of England, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following (i.e. in the Ordinal in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England) or hath had formerly episcopal consecration or ordination.' Its power of holding together in the future depends on the observance of this rule. It is equally true that its prospect of restoring inter-Communion with, for instance, the Orthodox and Old Catholic Churches depends on the same condition.

Catholic Tradition

5. In the proposed Scheme it is left entirely open whether in the united Church Confirmation will be eventually required. Confirmation is equated with the services of admission to full membership or recognition of new members which have been in use in the existing South Indian United Church or among the Wesleyans, and indiscriminate freedom for Communion is accorded to unconfirmed persons. The rule of the English Church definitely requires Confirmation (or the desire for Confirmation) as the preliminary to Communion; and we do not believe that the Church has any right to treat as indifferent an Apostolic ordinance which has been constantly believed to be the completion of Baptism and Sacramental means for the conveyance of the sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit, and therefore a necessary and indispensable element in the life of the Church.

6. The matters treated of above seem to us to be of supreme importance. There are others which require serious attention, but can wait till a later stage. At present we have thought it right to speak only of matters which

* It is added, 'or . . . would hinder the development of complete unity within the Church or imperil its subsequent progress towards union with other Churches.' It is plain these two latter conditions might operate in more than one direction.

seem to us to concern the essence of the Catholic tradition.

7. In conclusion, we desire to repeat that it is most distasteful to us to suggest objections to any scheme which has reunion for its object. But it is obvious that we cannot refrain from regarding every local scheme in the light of its bearing on the whole field or from asking the question whether a particular method of healing one existing schism may not result in producing another. Studying carefully the proposed Scheme as a whole, we find it necessary to ask whether there is among those proposing to unite a degree of fundamental agreement as to the nature of the Church, the ministry, and the Sacraments, sufficient to form a basis for such a union as would satisfy the requirements of the standards to which we have hitherto been pledged; and since we consider that this question is one which can receive a satisfactory answer only from persons of responsible judgment who are familiar with the conditions on the spot, we should welcome a full and careful pronouncement about it by the General Council of the Church of England in India.

(Signed by):

THE RT. REV. CHARLES GORE, D.D.
THE REV. PREBENDARY F. E. BRIGHTMAN, D.D. (*Fellow of Magdalene College, Oxford*).
FR. H. P. BULL (*Superior of the Society of St. John the Evangelist*).
THE REV. B. J. KIDD, D.D. (*Warden of Keble College, Oxford*).
THE REV. PREBENDARY MACKAY.
THE REV. G. A. MITCHELL, D.D. (*Principal of St. Stephen's House, Oxford*).
THE REV. LEONARD PRESTIGE.
THE REV. W. J. SPARROW SIMPSON, D.D.
MR. WILL SPENS, C.B.E., M.A. (*Master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge*).
THE REV. DARWELL STONE, D.D. (*Principal of Pusey House, Oxford*).
DR. CUTHBERT TURNER (*Dean Ireland's Professor of Exegesis of Holy Scripture in the University of Oxford*).

The Statement of the Anglo-Evangelical Group Movement

The following statement, after it had been carefully considered in the various groups, was unanimously approved by the annual winter conference of the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement held in the Church House:

The proposals for a united Church in South India which is to include the Anglican branch of the Church in that area must be viewed not only against the background of the general situation in India, but also in the light of the Mind of Christ, apprehended through the Spirit who is His interpreter. The South India United Church, the South India Provincial Synod of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and the responsible leaders of Anglicanism in India, confronted with the duty of extending Christ's Kingdom, have come to the conclusion that unless Christian forces are united the Church has little hope of accomplishing its task in that country. They believe that throughout their negotiations they have been guided by the Holy Spirit.

These proposals should be examined in connection with the 'Appeal to all Christian People' put out by the Lambeth Conference of 1920, and with the principles which underlie it. We are thankful that all the uniting Churches have accepted the basis for union laid down by the Lambeth Conference in 1888 and reaffirmed in 1920. This basis had in view the ultimate reunion of the older Churches of Christendom; and there appears to be nothing in the proposals which will render that aim more difficult of attainment hereafter.

The crux of the South Indian Church Scheme is the proposal that in the interim period, while the uniting Churches are growing into fuller unity, the non-episcopally ordained ministers of the uniting Churches shall be regarded as ministers of the Word and Sacraments in the united Church. The ultimate goal is a united Church under a constitutional episcopate. The interim policy is justified because, as was recognized at the Lambeth Conference of 1920, and still more clearly in the discussions between Anglican and Free Church leaders which followed the conference, facts clearly prove the value and reality of the Free Church ministries within the universal Church. Moreover, the situation in South India is one which entitles the Church to meet new needs with new methods.

That episcopacy belongs to the well-being of the Church, and that it provides the most hopeful means for securing reunion we cordially recognize; that it is essential to the existence of a Church we deny. We also gladly admit that the Spirit of God guided the early Church to adopt, as the result of its experience, the episcopal form of government; but that same Spirit has used and blessed other forms of Church government.

The desire in South India is to conserve within the united Church, for its enrichment and greater catholicity, the 'three scriptural elements—the Congregational, the Presbyterian, and the Episcopal.' We recognize the historical succession of the three-fold ministry as a fact, and the importance of preserving that succession if reunion is ever to be complete. But we believe that theory of 'apostolical succession' which regards the bishop as the sole channel of the grace essential for the transmission of valid ministerial authority rests upon no demonstrable historical basis, neither does such a theory, in our opinion, underlie the formularies of the Church of England.

It should be frankly recognized that in South India all parties to the scheme have made real advances. Within the sphere of ecclesiastical order and tradition it is an advance on the part of the Free Churchmen in India to be ready to accept episcopacy. It is equally an advance on the part of Anglicans to

be ready to acquiesce in the proposals for the interim period. The Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon is not being asked to make any advances which have not sufficient precedent in the history of the Church of England and justification in the history of the primitive Church.

If the proposals are rejected by our branch of the Church a great opportunity for advancing the growth and welfare of the Indian Church will have been lost. Further, the growing readiness on the part of the Free Churches both in India and elsewhere to accept the historic orders of the ministry as the basis for unity will receive a check. Also, since the Christian forces in foriegn field cannot but unite, union Churches, in which the Church of England has no place, will inevitably come into being. The consequence will be that the contribution which the Church of England has unboubtedly to offer to these Churches would be greatly diminished. If the South Indian proposals are accepted, the way will be opened up for a more rapid advance of the Gospel and the whole cause of reunion will receive a fresh impetus.

'A NEW ERA'

The following resolution was passed unanimously by the Conference :

We, the members of the A.E.G.M., welcome the proposals for a united Church which have now been set forth in constitutional form by the joint committee in South India.

We recognize the independence of the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon and its right to enter into communion with other Churches on a basis which shall have approved itself to its own bishops, clergy, and laity ; and we desire respectfully to express our admiration for the steps which the Anglican representatives on the joint committee have taken and the action of the general council in approving the main principles of the proposed union. In our judgment a new era of courageous action has been inaugurated, and the Appeal to all Christian People, which so greatly encouraged us at the time of the last Lambeth Conference, has in India been wisely and nobly translated into action.

We are impressed by the care which has been taken to preserve the essential elements of Anglican polity and doctrine, and at the same time to welcome the rich heritage of Free Church organisation and spiritual experience. We are especially grateful to our Indian brethren who, at the conference at Tranquebar in 1919, were chiefly responsible for initiating this scheme, and who boldly faced the risks that were involved. We also appreciate the courageous co-operation in this scheme of many whose ecclesiastical outlook otherwise differs from our own, and we regard this as an indication that Churchmen of different views may not only conscientiously but zealously join in this unique effort to fulfil the prayer of Christ 'that they all may be one . . that the world may believe.'

We recognise that with the coming of a period of experiment there is still much to be learnt, and unity schemes more perfect in detail may possibly in the purpose of God be devised, and in obedience to the Spirit of Christ carried through in the future; but we are confident that this particular scheme, so happily conceived and generously supported, should be acted upon without delay. We hope that the principles embodied in the scheme may serve as a further step towards Christian unity at home and in other parts of Christendom to which this advance in the mission field points the way.

Meanwhile, we shall unite with other members of the Church in praying that the Bishops who are shortly to assemble in conference at Lambeth may be guided to a right decision as to the advice they will offer on this vital and critical issue, and that the reality of our union in the Spirit may be so recognized in Christendom that the present toleration of our existing divisions may give way to a determined seeking after manifested unity.

Books on Church Union

Documents on Christian Unity, 1920-4, by G. K. A. Bell.
Documents on Christian Unity, second series to 1930, by G. K. A. Bell.
The Great Church Awakes, by Dr. Palmer.
The Christian Task in India, Edited by McKenzie.
The Doctrine of the Christian Church and Reunion—Headlam.
Christian Unity—Its History and Challenge —Slosser.
The Primitive Church, by Streeter.
Lausanne, 1927—E. S. Woods.
Faith and Order, (*Lausanne Conference*), Edited by Bate.
The Case for Episcopacy—Mackenzie.
The Call for Christian Unity, by Liberal Evangelicals.
Christian Unity, (*Lectures at Oxford*, 1930), by Headlam.
Report on Faith and Order, by Archbishops' Committee.
Christian Reunion in Ecumenical Light, by Hall.
Why South India Churches are Considering Union (four writers).
Lausanne, Lambeth, and S. India, by Dr. Williams.
Before We meet at the Lambeth Conference —Bishop of Pretoria.
Episcopal Ordination and Confirmation in Relation to Intercommunion and Reunion, by J. W. Hunkin, D.D.
Church Union in South India, The Story of the Negotiations, by E. H. M. Waller, D.D.
My Hopes and Fears for the Church, Edited by Sheppard Watersmeet, by Dr. Palmer.

PERIODICALS

The Review of the Churches, London.
The Church Union Quarterly, Baltimore, U.S.A.

These books and periodicals can be highly recommended to any one who wishes to know more about the question of Church Union. Many of them are quite recent. Several of them have been written to call the Bishops' attention to certain aspects of the problem of union before they meet at Lambeth. Other volumes can be recommended to those who wish to study the origins of the Church and its Ministry.

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